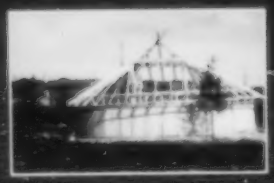
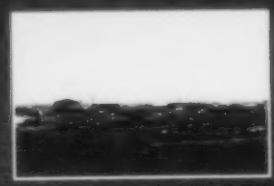
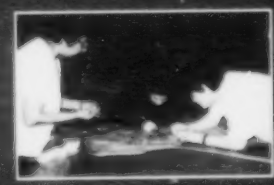
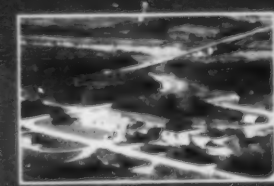
EXPERIENCES IN FIRST NATIONS,
INUIT AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLANNING









SHARING THE STORY

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FOREWORD

Elders, Chiefs and Council members, community administrators and community members:

The joint Indian and Northern Affairs Canada/First Nations and Inuit Comprehensive Community Planning working group expresses sincere gratitude and appreciation to the First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities profiled in this publication.

Sharing the Story: Experiences in First Nations, Inuit and Northern Comprehensive Community Planning is a rich collection of profiles that share the voices, knowledge and combined planning experience of more than 16 First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities, along with 13 additional First Nations communities associated with the Atlantic Canada Joint Community Planning Committee.

The lessons and experiences shared by the communities in this publication are meant to improve opportunities for other First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities to start and carry out their own community-based planning processes. This publication also highlights the importance of sharing stories between communities, something that our working group considers invaluable.

The success of First Nations, Inuit and Northern planning efforts also depends on the Government of Canada taking a coordinated and consistent approach to supporting community-based planning efforts. The partnership between federal departments demonstrates a more coordinated approach to supporting First Nations, Inuit and Northern comprehensive community planning and community sustainability.

This project is supported by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada. Thank you to the sponsoring departments for acknowledging the importance of this work, and for assisting in developing this tool which will facilitate greater 'community to community' learning in comprehensive community planning.

Merci / Thank you / Mngwetch / Gunalchîsh / Quannamik/ Quanamik/ Nakurmik/ Mutna / Mahsi cho/ Kukstumlhalap/ Hay $^{\theta}$ x^{w}q'a/ Nenachalhuya/ Hai Hai/ Kikitumechen/ Wopida

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document shares the stories of community planning in some First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities in Canada. The communities have different backgrounds, circumstances and priorities. This results in a rich diversity of planning experiences from which much can be learned. The community planning process has many dimensions and fits into many other important community functions. It is the central tool used to change community vision into reality.

These stories focus on some of the most current and relevant challenges and opportunities facing First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities today. The planning topics and communities are discussed in the following theme areas:

Community Relocations and Land Base Expansions:

- Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik, Quebec
- Mount Currie First Nation, British Columbia
- Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, Saskatchewan
- Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation, Quebec

Northern Communities:

- Hay River Dene Reserve, K'atl'odeeche First Nation, Northwest Territories
- N'Dilo and Dettah, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Northwest Territories
- Hamlet of Coral Harbour, Nunavut

Rural and Urban Communities:

- Rolling River First Nation, Manitoba
- Samson Cree Nation, Alberta
- Joint Community Planning Committee Communities, Atlantic Canada
- Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, British Columbia

***First Nations Land Management Act* Communities:**

- Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Ontario
- Muskoday First Nation, Saskatchewan
- Lheidli T'enneh, British Columbia

Self-Government Communities:

- Teslin Tlingit First Nation, Yukon
- Cree Nation of Mistissini, Quebec
- Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, Manitoba

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These communities have diverse populations and locations—they range from rural, remote and urban settings. Some work under different forms of legislation than others, which affects the best planning approaches for their situations. All of the communities have been successful in taking on their respective planning processes. Some of the key reasons for their success include:

Vision	Based on core community values.
Self-sufficiency	Moving towards self-governance and sustainability.
Process	Clear, effective and current planning tools, modelled on others and/or developed internally.
Continuity	Persistence and consistency through short and long-term planning.
Flexibility	Refining the planning process to match unique community characteristics and needs.
Integration	Comprehensive and co-ordinated strategic planning to achieve interlocking goals of community health, cultural preservation, socio-economic development and sustainability.
Partnership	Building relationships with other First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities, governments, academic institutions and private sector bodies to effectively create and carry out strategic plans.

These stories show how important comprehensive community planning is in First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities. Community planning is needed to chart out their chosen course of action and prepare for future challenges and opportunities.

This publication is one of a series available to assist "communities helping communities." Publications included in the *Sharing the Story* series include:

- Good Public Works Management;
- First Nations, Inuit and Northern Comprehensive Community Planning; and
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

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First Nations, Inuit and Northern community planning experiences

1.0 Introduction

This publication shares the experiences of First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities that are planning their future. The profiles, grouped according to five planning theme areas, are provided as a resource and learning tool. The planning theme areas include:

- Community Relocations and Land Base Expansions;
- Northern Communities;
- Rural and Urban Communities;
- First Nations Land Management Act (FNLMA) Communities; and
- Self-government Communities.

Each planning theme area has a brief overview, followed by the community profiles. Every community profile is unique. These profiles are good examples of the different kinds of community planning approaches that other First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities may wish to learn from. This tool exists to help communities learn from each other while increasing their own sustainability and empowerment.

> *"Sustainable development will be achieved through efforts and initiatives that empower communities. This may include community planning but the main responsibility of the older generation is to pass on valuable life lessons and management skills to the next generation to enhance a positive sense of self and gain insight into their identity and culture.*
>
> *The status quo level of service and functioning of communities is not acceptable. Tools in the area of comprehensive community planning can help to empower communities to become sustainable."*
>
> *–Chief Elmer Derrick, Hereditary Chief of the Gitxsan*

Community profiles as a resource and learning tool

This project was supported by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The work of INAC's working group for First Nation and Inuit Comprehensive Community Planning working group must be acknowledged. This group shows how important it is for communities to share their stories with each other.

The following First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities are also acknowledged and thanked for taking part in this project, and for their willingness to share their experiences and knowledge for the benefit of other Aboriginal communities:

- Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik, Quebec
- Coral Harbour, Nunavut
- Cree Nation of Mistissini, Quebec
- Hay River Dene Reserve, K'atl'odeeche First Nation, Northwest Territories
- Joint Community Planning Committee communities, Atlantic Canada
- Lheidli T'enneh, British Columbia
- Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Ontario
- Mount Currie First Nation, British Columbia
- Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, Saskatchewan
- Muskoday First Nation, Saskatchewan
- N'Dilo and Dettah, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Northwest Territories
- Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation, Quebec
- Rolling River First Nation, Manitoba
- Samson Cree Nation, Alberta
- Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, Manitoba
- Teslin Tlingit First Nation, Yukon
- Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, British Columbia

1.1 Why Plan?

Charting a chosen course

Planning gives a community the framework and process to examine its core values, create a vision for the future and work toward achieving that vision. Just as that vision will change and evolve with time, so must a community plan. The plan allows a community to play an active role in moving in the direction that it wants. It also allows a community to react appropriately to various challenges and opportunities.

Being prepared for challenges and opportunities

Once a community plan has been developed, it can be used:

- as a blueprint for the community's physical, economic and social development;
- as a springboard for community projects;
- as a basis for land and resource management;
- as a communications tool, for education and awareness, within the community and with external partners and stakeholders;
- to support funding applications;
- as a business tool to give background information for the community as a whole, or for community members, in building business relationships with other First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities, municipalities or private sector partners;
- as a basis for decision making in the community; and
- as a way to ensure that Chief and Council are accountable and transparent to community members.

1.2 What is Comprehensive Community Planning?

A co-ordinated and integrated approach

As societies develop, grow and change, the need for a co-ordinated and integrated approach to planning becomes more obvious. This is true for all development at global, regional and local levels. Comprehensive community planning includes developing and carrying out strategies to reach a balancing act of environmental stewardship, resource management, standard of living, cultural and traditional values and socio-economic conditions.

The "hub" of strategic thinking

In many ways, the planning process is the "hub" of strategic thinking for a community. A comprehensive planning approach includes plans for using land and physical assets, while keeping in mind the social, economic, geographic and political realities of the community.

Typical steps involved in creating and carrying out a comprehensive community plan include:

- defining the planning approach;
- building a planning framework;
- identifying potential uses of community plan;
- gathering information and identifying issues about the community;
- developing individual strategic plans in areas such as economic development, social services, environment, land use and physical assets;
- bringing together individual strategic plans in a comprehensive community plan;
- consulting with community members and other stakeholders at all stages;
- preparing to carry out, including identifying and developing, necessary resources and capacities;
- identifying and developing tools for regulating land use (site plans, district/neighbourhood plans, subdivision plan process, development charges, municipal servicing agreements, etc.);
- identifying and developing the final community plan product (poster plan, brochure, report or a combination);
- defining the role of the community plan as it relates to capital planning, housing, community physical development, council decision-making processes, etc.;
- identifying and addressing community plan administration needs (organizational structure, personnel, roles and responsibilities); and
- identifying a process for monitoring, reviewing and updating the plan.

The community profiles in this document show how this general process can work in many different situations.

1.3 Principles of Effective Community Planning

a broad vision

sustainability

clear goals

enforceability

flexibility

Some of the general principles of sound and effective community planning include:

- a broad *vision* with enough foresight to anticipate the community's long-term interests;
- *sustainability* to make sure that the plan will continue to work in the future without damaging the environment or conditions for future generations;
- *clear* goals, scope, process, phasing and measures of success;
- *enforceability* to make sure that leaders can lead, managers can manage and the entire community has a collective understanding of goals and expectations; and
- *flexibility* to make sure that the plan can evolve with changing circumstances.

2.0 Overview of Planning Themes and Community Profiles

Selection of communities represent a diverse cross-section

As part of this project, 16 communities and those involved with the Joint Community Planning Committee (JCPC) in Atlantic Canada were interviewed. These communities represent a cross-section of First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities in Canada. They each have different sizes, locations, levels of remoteness, arrangements with government and community planning approaches. **Figure 1** shows where each community is located.

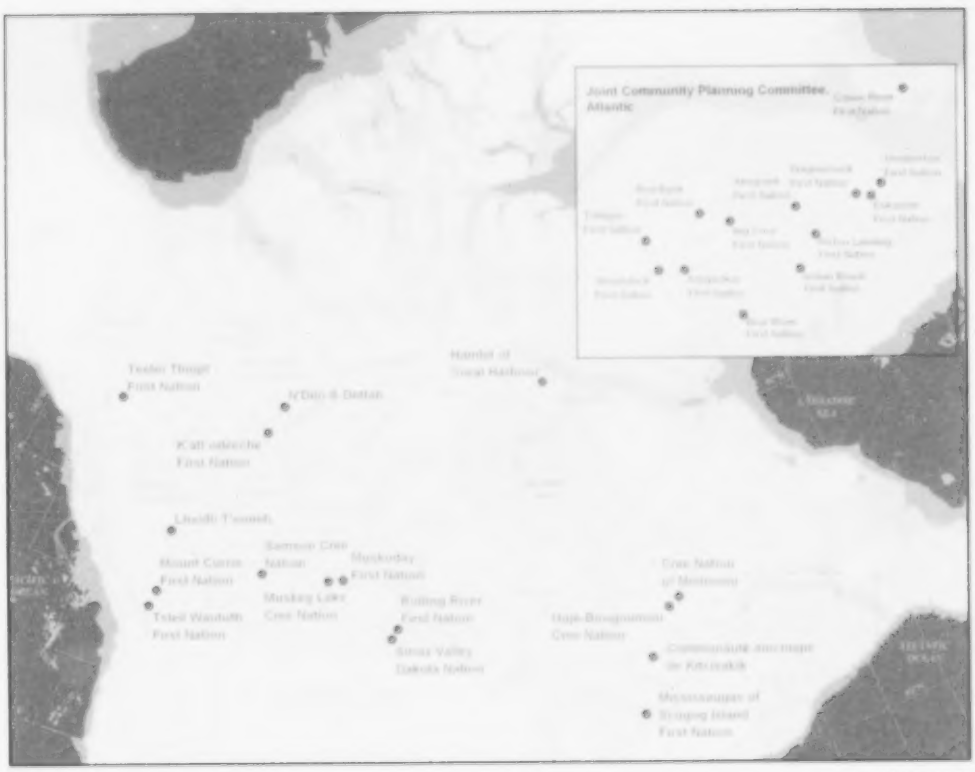

Figure 1

Site visits and interviews

The profiles are based on interviews with community members and representatives who are most familiar with planning in their community. Most often, those interviewed included Chiefs, Councillors, planners, planning advisors, land managers, economic development officers and planning trainees. Particular emphasis was placed on the most important aspect of planning associated with each community.

The following sections briefly introduce each of the publication's theme areas and give summaries of each community that has experience in that area. Key success factors identified for each community are also outlined. Detailed descriptions and the profiles are presented later in this publication.

2.1 Community Relocations and Land Base Expansions

Tools for turning ideas into action

First Nations communities relocate and expand their land base for many reasons under a variety of circumstances. Community plans and feasibility studies are useful tools for turning ideas into action.

Some First Nations, such as Oujé-Bougoumou in Quebec, have planned and created a new community at a new site from scratch. Anicinape de Kitcisakik, also in Quebec, is thinking about creating a new community site, and is starting planning processes to determine the feasibility of such a move.

In many cases, First Nations such as Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) in Saskatchewan expand their land base through the Land Treaty Entitlement Process. MLCN has acquired land in Saskatoon and developed it for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. Mount Currie First Nation in British Columbia created a new settlement area within their reserve to respond to the need for more housing.

While these circumstances are each unique, they share many common challenges and planning approaches to meet these challenges.

Community	Key success factors
Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik	• Living by core values and principles • Present sacrifice for future benefit • Long-term and broad planning perspective • Learning from others' experiences • Community commitment to move plan forward
Mount Currie First Nation	• Planning driven by housing needs • Skills development • Community consultation and commitment
Muskeg Lake Cree Nation	• Strong relationship building, involvement in business community • Building on early success • Flexible planning to match other jurisdictions • Long-term vision
Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation	• Visionary leadership • Determination • Effective use of outside resources • Blending tradition and innovation • Financial management

Communauté Anicinabe de Kitcisakik:
On the Road to Success

Grassroots comprehensive planning approach

Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik is a small First Nation community in La Verendrye Provincial Park in Quebec. The people of Kitcisakik are considered by some to be squatters, resisting the move to a reserve community. They live in their traditional territory, and do not have reserve status. They do not have funding for housing, water supply, sanitation, local education and a sustainable economic base. Early attempts at resolving the situation stalled because of a lack of internal community vision and the fact that it was an externally-driven process. Kitcisakik is getting ready to plan a new community. However, this time it is with a grassroots, more comprehensive planning approach. It includes finding ideas and inspiration from other First Nation communities and individuals.

Mount Currie First Nation:
Housing Needs Drive Community Development

Bringing together cultural values and community involvement

Mount Currie First Nation is about 40 kilometres north of Whistler, British Columbia. In the early 1970s, housing conditions badly needed upgrading and expanding. However, funding was not approved because the existing community and available building sites were located within the floodplain. The process that started so housing conditions could be improved eventually led to the creation of a new settlement about seven kilometres from the original site.

The development of a new community meant a chance to bring together cultural values and community involvement into the community plan. From an aerial view, the layout is in the shape of an eagle's head. It was planned to give privacy and living space to residents. The First Nation found that the planning of one community component—housing—led to an opportunity for more comprehensive community planning.

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation:
Collaborating Through Planning

Co-ordinated planning process

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) is in northern Saskatchewan, about 93 kilometres north of Saskatoon. The First Nation has about 1500 members, although only 230 of those members live within the community. Since the early 1980s, MLCN has succeeded in setting up a diverse economic base, much of which came from new lands for residential, commercial and industrial development.

As part of the Treaty Land Entitlement Process, MLCN has acquired urban lands in Saskatoon. In developing these lands, MLCN has worked with the City of Saskatoon, and provincial and federal governments, in a co-ordinated planning process. The First Nation has met its development needs while working within, and complying with, other planning jurisdictions. MLCN is ready for continued successful community development, thanks to the capacities and knowledge gained.

Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation:
Building a Community from Scratch

Blending conventional technologies with innovation and tradition

Oujé-Bougoumou is in the James Bay Territory of Quebec. After being displaced from site to site over several decades, a permanent community was finally established during the early 1990s. Although there were advantages to creating a community from scratch, Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation had to plan all aspects of the community at once. This was an overwhelming challenge but Oujé-Bougoumou proved more than capable of meeting it. Through perseverance and determination, it developed solutions blending conventional technologies with innovation and tradition. The result, an award-winning community, is compatible with the surrounding land and with the culture of the people it serves.

2.2 Northern Communities

A balance between development and preservation

Northern Aboriginal communities share several features that affect how they take on and carry out community planning. Most Northern communities are remote, a factor that limits access, services and resources. Winter climates can be harsh and the terrain on which communities are located can be harsh. These factors significantly affect the planning of community infrastructure, structures, housing and energy systems.

Except for the Hay River Dene Reserve, Northern Aboriginal communities are not reserves under the *Indian Act*. They are similar to municipalities, which have their land use planning, infrastructure, education, health and housing needs met as part of the normal operations of their local and territorial governments. Reserves operate under federal statutes, while Northern communities operate under the various statutes of the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

Another factor that affects planning in Northern Aboriginal communities is the strong influence of natural resources and how they are managed, both environmentally and for economic development. Whether economic development is pursued through partnerships or developed internally, the main challenge is to strike a balance between development and preservation. The long standing and strong connection of Inuit and First Nations people to the land places them in a unique and invaluable position to achieve this balance.

Community	Key success factors
Hay River Dene Reserve, K'atl'odeeche First Nation	• Planning driven by environmental protection and improved community safety • Combined traditional approaches with modern municipal landuse and control • Community members give direction to planning consultant • Strong relationship with neighbouring municipality
N'Dilo and Dettah, Yellowknives Dene First Nation	• Simple yet comprehensive approach • Poster-board format • Partnership with neighbouring municipality
Hamlet of Coral Harbour	• Capitalizing on local opportunity for sustainable economic development • Setting achievable goals as a starting point • Effective resource management

Hay River Dene Reserve, K'atl'odeeche First Nation:
Community Planning Pays Off

Input from community workshops

The Hay River Dene Reserve is north of the 60th parallel on the south shore of Great Slave Lake. It is the only reserve in the Northwest Territories. K'atl'odeeche First Nation has about 525 members, with 270 of those living on the reserve. The First Nation is across the river from Hay River, a town of 4000 people. The town has both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents.

The First Nation was created in the early 1970s, in response to concerns of the K'atl'odeeche First Nation people about the infringement on their traditional territories. Initial development was based on the needs of the day. The First Nation then undertook a community plan based on input from community workshops. This was followed by the development of land use planning and zoning bylaws. One of the goals of the housing policy was to minimize the risk of flooding and reduce the cost of servicing. The First Nation has also worked on striking a balance between development and preservation. It has done so through a partnership with private industry to integrate traditional ecological knowledge with geographical information systems (GIS).

N'Dilo and Dettah, Yellowknives Dene First Nation:
Practicality in the North

Long standing planning process and making use of poster plans

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation has two communities, N'Dilo and Dettah, on Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories. The First Nation does not have a legislated authority. This has shaped its approach to planning. It is not a reserve under federal legislation and is not a municipality under the territorial government. Nevertheless, the planning process at N'Dilo and Dettah has been in effect for some time. Plans in report format have been replaced by the use of poster plans. These posters show a map of the community, are colour-coded and include quick notes showing land use, restrictions under designated areas and facility sites. The First Nation's long term plans are to use the Treaty Land Entitlement approach to go after self-government.

Hamlet of Coral Harbour:
Originality and Resource Management

A community plan and by-laws to guide development

Coral Harbour is an Inuit hamlet on Southampton Island at the top of Hudson Bay. The community is governed by a mayor and council and has about 750 community members. Coral Harbour has created a community plan and bylaws to guide its development. The planning process is enhanced by a strong working relationship with the Kivalliq Inuit Association and the Nunavut Impact Review Board. One of the community's most successful economic development ventures is Canada's only commercial caribou harvest. The harvest employs about 50 people in the community and generates about $750,000 each year.

2.3 Rural and Urban Communities

Self determination combined with resources and strong working relationships

First Nation communities in Canada exist in a variety of rural and urban settings. A rural First Nation community usually has a small population and low density development. There is often individual lot-by-lot servicing for water and wastewater infrastructure. In some cases, there is a higher density core area with concentrated infrastructure and development. Urban First Nations can either be an urban community by themselves or they can be categorized as urban because they are integrated with a surrounding urban environment.

One of the most significant factors that determines the best planning approach for a community is how it views its current and desired situation. This will determine how it grows, develops and interacts with other First Nations, governments and private sector entities.

Rolling River First Nation, in southern Manitoba, is a small rural community with relatively sparse development. The community is used to this type of culture and lifestyle, and plans to maintain its rural setting.

Samson Cree Nation in central Alberta is also in a rural setting. However, growth in the community has meant a shift toward the main townsite and an urban development standard. The First Nation has developed a community plan and is now carrying it out.

In Atlantic Canada, a number of small rural First Nation communities have combined resources to create a community planning process that benefits all. The Joint Community Planning Committee created the First Nations Community Planning Model in 2000. This seven-step model has been tested in three First Nation pilot communities.

In recent decades, the First Nation community of Tsleil-Waututh in British Columbia has been surrounded by increasing urban development in Vancouver. Rather than just observing, the community is playing an active role in planning and development in the urban area. This approach has been particularly successful for the First Nation because it has established strong working relationships with the City of Vancouver and private sector development partners.

Community	Key success factors
Rolling River First Nation	• Focus on economic development • Strong leadership • Skills development and capacity building
Samson Cree Nation	• Co-ordinated planning function • Defined planning process • Commitment and perseverance
Joint Community Planning Committee	• Collaboration of First Nation, federal and university resources and expertise • Development of planning model—a simple, well-defined process with real results • Community involvement • Capacity building through shared trainee program
Tsleil-Waututh First Nation	• Open regional involvement • Effective partnering • Well-developed planning models

Rolling River First Nation:
Planning for Economic Development

Long term vision and planning

Rolling River First Nation is south of Riding Mountain National Park in rural Manitoba. The community of 500 has a low residential density and little commercial development. Community planning initiatives are focused on economic development opportunities.

A community meeting was held to encourage members to contribute their ideas. Next they took an inventory of the community's human resources. The First Nation first focused on opportunities that could be carried out with existing resources and those connected to available funding programs. In 1998, Rolling River signed a Treaty Entitlement Agreement, which led to more possibilities for development.

A community review and approval process

The community's long-term goals include reaching 95 percent employment while following sustainable development guidelines. These guidelines reflect community values, protect cultural and ecological integrity, and make sure there is a community review and approval process.

Samson Cree Nation:
Creating an Urban Townsite in a Rural Setting

Welcoming urban environment which reflects cultural needs

The Samson Cree Nation (SCN) is in central Alberta, 50 kilometres south of Edmonton. Most of the 5800 residents are spread out over its land base. Over the years, SCN realized that settlement practices in the community cannot continue to rely on rural land for housing. The First Nation's community development plan aims to prevent further fragmentation of their land base. They will do this by creating a welcoming urban environment that reflects the culture and needs of its members. New residential development will take place within the urban townsite area. The urban area will also include commercial development, shopping facilities, highway commercial development, job opportunities and improved services and amenities.

Joint Community Planning Committee:
Atlantic First Nations Combining Planning Initiatives-Planning for Planning

Collaboration of First Nations, federal and University resources and expertise

For small rural First Nations, planning is just one of many important jobs that compete for limited resources and expertise. Often, human and financial resources are spread too thin for a community to take the time to consider developing a comprehensive community-based plan. The Joint Community Planning Committee (JCPC) was created to pool resources of 13 Atlantic First Nations. Six federal departments and Dalhousie University helped with planning resources.

The First Nations Community Planning Model was created as a simple, well-defined process. The model was tested in three pilot communities. The 13 communities took part in a capacity building program to help develop experience and understanding.

Tsleil-Waututh First Nation:
An Aboriginal Community in an Urban Setting

Living in a rapidly developing traditional territory

The Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, a Coastal Salish community of about 375 members, occupies a 110-hectare reserve on Burrard Inlet in North Vancouver and two smaller reserves at the head of the Indian Arm River. Being so near the centre of a major city presents both opportunities and challenges. A traditional territory that is home to an urban population of over one million people offers an exciting range of economic development options. At the same time, this urban setting can present many barriers to carrying out age-old patterns of wild food harvest and spiritual practice. For the Tsleil-Waututh, living in a rapidly developing traditional territory has meant accepting the responsibility to protect and enhance the Tsleil-Waututh cultural traditions, while actively participating in complex regional governance and development arenas.

2.4 *First Nations Land Management Act* Communities

Taking control of land management

Many First Nations operating under the *Indian Act* have been limited in their ability to control their land. They have had less chances to develop economic opportunities linked to the land. Government approval processes can hold up lease and business development initiatives. Often, potential business partners cannot afford to wait and so take their business to non-Aboriginal partners. Now that economic development is seen as a strategy for improving conditions in communities, lost opportunities can be devastating.

For some First Nations, opting out of the *Indian Act* for land management has opened up opportunities to control their lands and for economic development. They can do this through the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management (FAFNLM). This agreement was ratified by the *First Nations Land Management Act* (FNLMA) and by participating First Nations as they pass land codes.

The FNLMA is an important step toward self-government. It allows First Nations to manage their reserve lands outside of the *Indian Act*. Since First Nations have a close relationship to the land, it makes sense for land management to be the first step toward self-government. Opting out of the *Indian Act* for land management and adopting the FNLMA can affect how a First Nation proceeds with community planning and development.

Participating First Nations have found that taking control of land management has given them additional capacity, confidence and revenues that can be put toward social and economic development. This chapter shares the experiences of three First Nations: Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Muskoday First Nation and Lheidli T'enneh First Nation.

Community	Key success factors
Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation	• Cooperation among First Nations • Efficient planning processes • Best use of limited resources
Muskoday First Nation	• Trusted leadership • Innovative economic and land development • Skilled labour force
Lheidli T'enneh First Nation	• Focusing available human resources • Involvement and commitment of family groups • Consistency of leadership and involved personnel • Partnerships with other First Nations and neighbouring municipalities

Taking advantage of opportunities

Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation:
First Nations Land Management Act
—One Step Closer to Self-Government

The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation is one of the smallest First Nations in Ontario, in terms of area. It has a land base of about 240 hectares on the interior of Scugog Island. The community is about 12 kilometres northeast of Port Perry. It has only 170 members, 65 of whom live on the reserve. Vehicles can get on to the island by a causeway for Highway 7A.

One of the more important commercial establishments in the area is the Great Blue Heron Charity Casino. Located right on the reserve, the casino is owned and operated by the First Nation. Even with very limited human resources in the community, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation has taken responsibility for its land management under the FNLMA. Many other First Nations adopting the FNLMA have used Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation's land code as a model.

Social and economic improvements

Muskoday First Nation:
Removing the Roof

Muskoday First Nation is about 20 kilometres southeast of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The community has some of the best agricultural lands in western Canada. When members both on and off the reserve voted in favour of their community developing its own land code, Muskoday became the third First Nation to adopt the FNLMA. Members credit significant social and economic improvements in their community to the adoption of the FNLMA.

A community land code and community involvement

Lheidli T'enneh First Nation:
Gaining Control of Land Management is First and Foremost

The community of Lheidli T'enneh is on the northeast boundary of Prince George, British Columbia, just above where the Fraser and Nechako rivers join. It also has one reserve land parcel in Prince George and two others on the Nechako River. About 100 of the 308 members of the First Nation live on-reserve.

Although the community is fairly small in terms of band membership and land base, its members have successfully focused on effective community planning. The community land code, developed as part of the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management, provides the basis of the Lheidli T'enneh land use planning approach. The ongoing success of the planning process is thanks to the involvement of many community members. All family groups have contributed.

2.5 Self-Government Communities

Building capacities and planning for the future of their communities

For many First Nations, the community planning process is the hub of many other community functions. Yet for communities involved in self-government, the community planning function is influenced by the broader theme of self-determination. For these communities, the process can be challenging and can test limited human resources and community capacities. At the same time, however, it can be a source of motivation, structure and the foundation for rewarding results.

To start community planning, and still keep the principles of self-government in mind, each of the profiled First Nations reflected on their values and identity. They did this so they would know where they wanted to go and how they wanted to get there. All of the communities view community consultation as one of the most important ingredients to successful self-government and community planning.

These communities agree that it will take time and hard work but self-determination is worth the fight. They are increasing their ability to effectively plan for the future of their communities, thanks to the issues addressed and capacities developed along the way.

Community	Key success factors
Teslin Tlingit First Nation	• Culturally-based governance, based on clan system • Perseverance for rights and breaking new ground • Strong multi-jurisdictional management
Cree Nation of Mistissini	• Highly focused community members, organized in the initiatives they go after • Energy, pride and a strong sense of ownership and responsibility • Well-developed community organizational structure • Organizational stability, capability and consistency, gained through membership in the Cree Nation of Quebec
Sioux Valley Dakota Nation	• Perseverance through 15 years of negotiations • Community support and involvement • Capacity building and skills development • Use of the *First Nations Land Management Act* as a stepping stone to developing land code

Teslin Tlingit First Nation:
Including the Tlingit Way

Long-term strategic planning

Teslin Tlingit First Nation is part of the Village of Teslin in the Yukon. Teslin is a municipality shared by both Tlingit and non-First Nation people. The First Nation is governed by its clan-based Chief and Council, with each of the five community clans represented. The village is governed by its mayor and council.

In 1995, Teslin Tlingit was one of four Yukon First Nations to sign an individual agreement to carry out self-government. An internal Lands and Resources Department is responsible for planning and development applications within the community. As well, a Regional Land Use Planning Commission gives direction about land issues in the broader Teslin settlement area. The Teslin Tlingit Council's initiatives are guided by the 25-year strategic plan and reflect the goal to include the Tlingit way into all systems of government.

Cree Nation of Mistissini:
A Community Focused on Success

Pride and ownership

The Cree Nation of Mistissini is a community of about 3000 members, 850 kilometres north of Montreal. Mistissini is one of nine communities belonging to the Cree Nation of Quebec, and has signed on to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. The Cree Regional Authority and the Grand Council of the Crees provide a regional governmental framework that works well with Mistissini's local administrative organization.

The community planning process in Mistissini started at a basic level, driven by a basic need for housing. Today, the community has a planning process that looks after physical, social, economic and cultural development. Now Mistissini is a thriving community with pride and ownership shown in its character, architecture and many community enterprises. The people of Mistissini have fought to create opportunity for themselves. More importantly, they are determined to take advantage of opportunity once it comes their way.

Sioux Valley Dakota Nation:
Self-Government Catalyst for Community Planning

Road to self-empowerment

The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation is in southwestern Manitoba, 50 kilometres west of Brandon. Sioux Valley began self-government negotiations in 1988. It signed a framework agreement in 1990 and a comprehensive Agreement-in-Principle in 2001. The final self-government agreement is scheduled for signing in 2004, with the ratification vote in 2005. In preparation for self-government, Sioux Valley recognizes the need for a number of planning and management projects. It is now developing a citizenship code, comprehensive community plan, land code, environmental audit, needs assessment and administrative review.

3.0 Common Elements of Success

Communities helping communities

These community profiles support the idea that community planning positively contributes to the development of healthy and functional First Nation, Inuit and Northern communities. While the communities may have different priorities and circumstances, they share many common elements in their community planning approaches.

Engaging Community Members

Continuing support and commitment

Many of the communities have strong influencing factors and contributors to their community planning process. For example, they may have leaders within the community, hired planning experts or technical support agencies. However, the main source of vision and direction comes from community members. Communities often use information gathered from meetings and similar forums. They may also find ways for community members to have an active and meaningful role in the process. A sense of pride and ownership overcomes the many challenges of community development. In the end, the community becomes a positive reflection of its people.

Examples of this type of arrangement in communities include:

- specialized working groups for youth, Elders and women;
- family-based planning approaches; and
- supporting community members who want to start their own businesses.

Creating Sustainable Opportunity

Creating positive development opportunities

It is important for all First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities to build in ways that will attract, support and keep members. As these communities grow, develop and take on new responsibilities, there is an increasing need to establish their own skilled and diverse human resource pool. It is important for the communities to have physical, social, cultural and economic strength. The profiled communities place a high priority on creating sustainable opportunity for their members, and especially for their youth. The stories show how all of the communities, in their own way, looked at their circumstances and created positive development opportunities.

The need to create a sustainable community is obvious in Anicinape de Kitcisakik in Quebec. This First Nation has only 360 members. About 60 percent of members are under the age of 20. Living conditions in the present community site are poor. Most children must travel to the community of Val d'Or for school. The survival of Anicinape de Kitcisakik depends on its ability to make a sustainable community for its next generation.

Samson Cree Nation knows it must focus future residential growth in the townsite area. However, to keep the community committed to this approach, the First Nation knows they need to make the townsite a more welcoming and attractive place to live.

Planning healthy communities

Individual Initiatives as a Catalyst to Comprehensive Planning

Many of these stories tell of First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities going after an individual project or initiative, only to find themselves drawn into other areas that need a comprehensive planning approach. Since many of these communities have historically had inadequate housing, this is often where the initial need comes from. However, addressing this need causes other requirements. They must consider physical infrastructure as well as land use and social and economic planning.

Mount Currie First Nation started with a housing project that led to a new community site. Sioux Valley Dakota Nation's quest for self-government has led them to consider issues such as developing a community vision, goals and land code, assessing needs, reviewing administration, and preparing a community development plan.

Skills development that strengthens the entire community

Planning Processes Lead to Internal Capacity Development

When these communities take on increasingly complex and structured approaches to planning and development, their human resources and internal capacities are often tested to the limit. This is especially the case for smaller communities, such as the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation and for communities undertaking self-government such as Teslin Tlingit First Nation. The time, attention and resources available for the community planning process may be limited. However, at the risk of taking on too many responsibilities, many First Nations take on ambitious planning processes such as opting into the *First Nations Land Management Act* or working toward self-government agreements. By taking on planning on many fronts, progress can sometimes seem slow. Many First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities have said that the process is difficult. However, all agree that the processes, policies and capacities developed while addressing these initiatives strengthens the entire community.

Collaborative community planning to seize opportunities

Relationships are Key

These communities demonstrate the need to build relationships to improve their planning and development capabilities. In the case of the Joint Community Planning Committee, several Atlantic First Nations have worked with each other, as well as academic and governmental bodies to improve their respective planning processes. In other situations, First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities built strong relationships with neighbouring or nearby municipalities. For example, Tsleil-Waututh First Nation works with Vancouver and Muskeg Lake Cree Nation is taking on planning activities with Saskatoon. There are also many cases where First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities work with the private sector, usually on economic development.

Relationships like these have helped First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities find and capitalize on opportunities. They also allow them to learn and share information about community planning.

Increased Involvement in Traditional Territories

Separate but co-ordinated planning approaches

Many of the profiled communities plan activities that take place in their traditional territories. Often, the jurisdictional control of these lands is shared. First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities often choose to keep the planning activities separate from, yet co-ordinated with, planning directly within their communities. This approach is used by the Teslin Tlingit First Nation, Cree Nation of Mistissini, Yellowknives Dene First Nation and K'atl'odeeche First Nation (Hay River Dene).

Planning within traditional territories often involves:

- using geographical information systems to do extensive mapping and to create biophysical inventories;
- managing resources;
- making multi-party agreements;
- protecting environmental and cultural sites; and
- traditional use studies.

Accountability

Providing a structured course of action

Community planning can turn visions, expectations and goals into a structured course of action. Through this process, the people creating and carrying out community plans are accountable to members in the community who give input and overall direction. All of the profiled communities are committed to strong community consultation processes. Those involved in the FNLMA and self-government approaches often require that community plans, land use plans and land codes be adopted by community votes. This makes sure there is accountability and encourages community involvement throughout the process.

Communities can demonstrate to outside partners and financiers that their basis for community, economic and social development is sound and rational by using the planning tool. They show accountability through formal methods and processes such as joint planning committees, information sharing agreements and servicing agreements.

Leadership

Working with the needs and direction of the community

Strong and consistent leadership is important for planning a successful community. The leadership shown in the profiled communities takes many forms that work with the needs and directions of the communities themselves. In some communities, such as Rolling River and Muskeg Lake, leaders have a strong focus on economic development. For communities involved in self-government and the FNLMA, strong leadership is needed to guide them through new and complex negotiation and administrative processes. Leaders of communities thinking about or starting community relocation processes, such as Kitcisakik, Mount Currie and Oujé-Bougoumou, must be strong in creating a clear and consistent vision for new community development.

The community profiles of the Cree Nation of Mistissini reflects on three styles of leadership that are particularly relevant: charismatic, traditional and legal/rational. Community leaders need these characteristics to offer inspiration and confidence, while reflecting cultural and traditional values within today's social, economic and political environment.

4.0 Looking Ahead

Continued commitment

For any community, the planning process is ongoing and evolutionary. It is the same with First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities. While there is no one fixed, ready-made planning model ideal for all communities, there are different models and tools that can help in the process. Based on recent trends and on the stories shared by these profiled communities, the planning process will likely involve:

- integrated and comprehensive planning approaches;
- enhanced internal capacities for community master planning;
- continued development of planning models and policies such as land use codes, zoning and bylaws;
- continued involvement in traditional territory planning, resource management and partnerships;
- expanded land bases;
- an ongoing focus on economic development and resource protection to create a sustainable situation for future generations;
- strengthening of relationships in proactive planning processes; and
- increased amount of planning and decision making at the local level.

As involvement and interaction of these communities increases, so does the need for internal capacities to respond. Change is taking place as First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities work toward economic development and self-determination. At the same time, they are working to protect resources in ways that are economically and environmentally sustainable for future generations. Communities are well on their way to forming the relationships and building the capacities needed to successfully manage and direct this change. Still, human and financial resources are stretched thin in many communities as they move in new directions. Continued commitment is needed to make sure that growth and progress match the visions, aspirations and expectations of First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities.

SHARING THE STORY

COMMUNITY RELOCATIONS AND LAND BASE EXPANSIONS

EXPERIENCES IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY RELOCATIONS AND LAND BASE EXPANSIONS

First Nation community relocations and land base expansions can take place for many reasons under various circumstances. Community plans and associated feasibility studies are useful tools for turning ideas into action.

Some First Nations, such as Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation in Quebec, have planned and created a new community at a new site from scratch. Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik, also in Quebec, is now thinking about creating a new community site. It is taking on planning processes to decide how realistic such a move would be. In many cases, First Nations such as Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) in Saskatchewan can expand their land base through the Land Treaty Entitlement Process. MLCN has acquired land in Saskatoon and developed it for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. Mount Currie First Nation in British Columbia responded to a housing need by creating a new settled area within their reserve boundaries.

While these circumstances are each unique, they share many challenges and planning approaches used to meet those challenges. Figure 2 shows the location of each community.

Figure 2

Development Goals

Vision is needed to create a new community or new community development area. The planning process includes a consultation process. This is when community members and leaders reflect on their core values to decide what they hope to accomplish with their project. These project-specific goals usually relate directly to the community's long-term social, cultural and economic goals.

Site Selection

After a vision is established, selecting a site is often one of the first things to do. This can be challenging since there are bound to be different opinions on what site to choose. Furthermore, site practicality and feasibility must be fully assessed in the selection process. Many of the site selection criteria are similar, regardless of the reasons a site is used. Before starting such a project, the First Nation typically assesses:

- goals and needs;
- purpose of relocation or land base expansion;
- management and human resource capacity; and
- financial and investment capacity.

If these considerations are looked after, specific sites and site selection criteria are considered. The criteria typically include:

- location;
- area (size);
- land use and/or zoning;
- site servicing and infrastructure feasibility;
- site improvement and/or development;
- transportation and accessibility;
- cultural, environmental, and natural resource significance;
- off-site costs; and
- acquisition terms and cost.

Also of importance are existing and potential uses of surrounding lands. New sites are evaluated not only on their own, but also within the context of surrounding lands. This sometimes includes traditional First Nation territories and "shared use" lands. Land use planning is therefore important and often meshes with the planning processes of other areas.

Strong, consistent leadership and an effective community consultation process are key to successful site selection.

Comprehensive Planning Approach

In many cases, the motivation for a First Nation to expand its land base may come from one main need, such as housing or economic development. This can set off a chain reaction of social, cultural, practical and financial issues. For example, residential areas must be planned so that the people living there are comfortable in their cultural setting and have access to schools, jobs, recreation, health care and commerce. Economic development lands must be planned with an understanding of target markets and the relevant business environment. Any type of land development needs support services and infrastructure. It must take place with principles of economic and environmental sustainability in mind.

This chain reaction shows how important it is to have a comprehensive and integrated approach to planning. The vision and corresponding planning process must be broad to make sure social, economic and environmental interests are fulfilled, and that the perspective of other stakeholders is considered.

First Nation Successes

The First Nation communities profiled in this chapter show the benefits of carrying out a strategic planning process in various circumstances with new communities and expansions to land bases. In all cases, the First Nations began a long and challenging planning process to improve their communities. In doing so, they are moving closer to achieving their land development goals, and are also developing skills and capacities to move their communities forward in unforeseen ways.

COMMUNAUTÉ ANICINAPE DE KITCISAKIK

On the Road to Success

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Living by core values and principles
- Present sacrifice for future benefit
- Long-term and broad planning perspective
- Learning from others' experiences
- Community commitment to move plan forward

Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik is a small First Nation community in La Verendrye Provincial Park in Quebec. The people of Kitcisakik are considered by some to be squatters, resisting the move to a reserve community. They live in their traditional territory, and do not have official reserve status. They do not have funding for housing, water supply, electricity, sanitation, or local education. They do not have a sustainable economic base. Early attempts at resolving the situation stalled because of a lack of internal community vision and the fact that it was an externally-driven process. Kitcisakik is getting ready to plan a new community. However, this time it is with a grassroots, more comprehensive planning approach. It includes finding ideas and inspiration from other First Nation communities and individuals.

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	309
Reserve area	To be determined
Townsite	Communauté Anicinape de Kitcisakik
Region	Quebec
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access
Climate zone	Code B: geographic location between 45 and 50 degrees latitude.

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Climate zone	Code B: geographic location between 45 and 50 degrees latitude

The people of Kitcisakik have lived in the area for hundreds of years, with the main area at a gathering place called Grand Lake. Kitcisakik means "large water opening or large mouth of river" in the Algonquin language. Grand Lake, also called Grand Lake Victoria, was once a hub for the Hudson's Bay Company because of the many trap lines in what is now the park area.

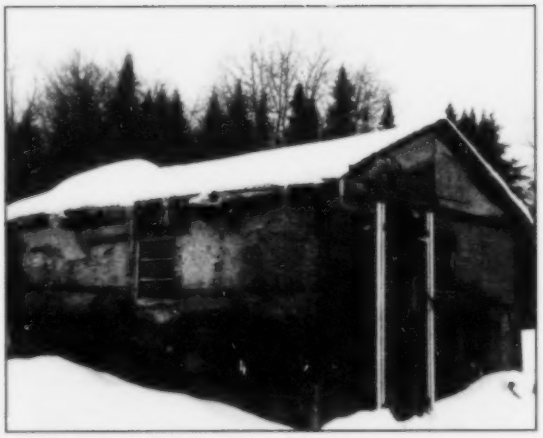
Although Kitcisakik has about 380 members, only about two-thirds live at the settlement site. About 60 percent of the community members are under the age of 30 and only 5 percent are over the age of 65.

While other Algonquin people of the area have, at various points in history, moved to reserve communities, the people of Kitcisakik have resisted that option for many decades. Instead, they have continued to live in their traditional territory, in close harmony with very few material goods.

People of the settlement know there is a need for basics of living such as adequate housing, a safe and ample supply of water, proper sanitation, local education reflecting their cultural heritage, and a sustainable economic base. However, the process of creating a new community is not a simple one. Chief Papatie explains:

"The people of our community don't really like the concept of a reserve. They don't want to be hemmed into a space that will be inadequate in the future. They've seen this happen to other First Nations in our area. They are accustomed to living in the openness of the land and they're concerned that if they accept an arrangement to move to a reserve they will limit their access to the land and diminish their role as stewards of the land. This is why we've been talking about moving for more than 30 years without any results. Our people want to protect the land and be self-sufficient. Moving to a new community will change us forever."

"It's difficult to rebuild trust, but if we are to somehow reach some sort of concrete engagement with the government for a move to occur, we will have to build new relationships. Those relationships have to be developed not only with government, but within our community."



Joe Gunn's old house

Joe Gunn's new house

Current Site Conditions – Incentive for Change

The situation and conditions at Kitcisakik are inappropriate for many reasons. Existing housing is largely one-room sheds with wood stoves. Up until two years ago, most housing was not insulated. It is common for six or seven people to live in each house. Even today, homes do not have running water or washrooms. Outhouses still exists at many homes. It was not until 2001 that a community shower and laundry facility was built for all community members to use. Before its construction, the only running water available was a common tap at the Health Centre. Funding for housing built in recent years ranged between $7,000 to $10,000 each, with local labour used to finish construction. A generator supplies power to the band office and health center. Power is unreliable and blackouts are common.

Younger children at Kitcisakik attend a pre-school on the settlement site. At age five, they attend school in Val d'Or, a one-hour drive from Kitcisakik. From Monday to Friday, children and teenagers live in foster or "school" homes in Val d'Or. They return to Kitcisakik on Friday to spend weekends with their parents and other community members. Most of their time during school months is spent away from home. This situation is far from ideal from a parenting and family perspective. During the week, while their children are away at school, many community members take training courses in life skills and parenting.

In 2001, community Elder and trapper Joe Gunn and his sister Rebecca moved from their one-room home to a newer one. Both are one-room houses, but the new one has insulation. This cuts the wood fuel needs by two-thirds. Chief Papatie looks at the Gunn's old house and comments, "About 40 years or so ago, I was born in a house just like this. I was raised in that house in a family of 16. Things have been difficult for all of us. We survived, but now we want to live."

Considering a new community site	
July 1983	Council resolution asking Quebec to identify and reserve Baie Barker as a potential community site.
October 1983	Council resolution confirming choice of Baie Barker for village site.
1986	Consultant report called "Request of the Creation of a Reserve at Baie Barker."
1987	Process stopped because of lack of consultation and community involvement.
1996	Community consultation and survey showed support for the creation of a new community site.
July 2000	Study completed. Site identification in consultation with community.
Fall 2000	Choice by community: lac Wekwabiyak site.
April 2001	Council resolution asking that INAC start a process immediately to build a permanent community at the lac Wekwabiyak site.
May 2002	Submitted Strategic Development Plan to INAC (18-month process).
September 2002	Contracted a full-time relocation management advisor to March 2005.
November 2002	Physical terrain assessments started. Geotechnical and hydrogeotechnical assessments to evaluate the feasibility of water supply and construction.
2003	Development of a community plan. Community referendum upcoming.

Previous Process Frustrated

In the early 1980s, Kitcisakik considered a new community location. They had even selected a site. However, the process essentially stalled and was not started again for another 10 years. Chief Papatie remembers some of the pitfalls:

> *"In the 1980s we didn't have a vision. The federal government prepared a feasibility study, but it wasn't really a master plan, which is really what's needed. Also, the consultation for the proposal was limited to the Council level rather than obtaining meaningful input from the community itself. So the proposal was rejected, primarily because there was no provision for protecting the land and trapping."*

Revitalizing the Planning Process

After thinking about it for 10 years, Kitcisakik decided to restart the process in the mid-1990s. A survey of the community was done to see if there was support for doing so. The survey was also used to get some background information about the views of community members on relocation.

In 2000, a site selection study was completed. A site at lac Wekwabiyak, about 5 kilometres away, was selected as the preferred option. Hydrogeological and soil tests were done in the fall of 2002. Test results, however, were not favourable to meet the long-term needs of the community. This brought the process back to the start.

In March 2003, the Chief and Council sent their report to INAC. The report had recommendations and a plan to start defining community vision and a strategic development plan. This would be followed by identifying a new site that best meets the community values, needs and basic requirements to make sure there is sustainable socio-economic development.

A Strategic Development Plan was produced between 2000 and 2001. A contracted planning facilitator guided Kitcisakik through a series of planning exercises that involved:

- developing a mission statement and related priorities;
- setting goals for education, health and economic development; and
- characterizing the community for strengths, weaknesses and problematic areas.

This process was done with the involvement of:

- Council members;
- management committee members (health, education, finance/administration, assets); and
- advisors from the Committee of Social Development.

Kitcisakik has also found ideas and inspiration from other experienced First Nation communities and individuals. Kitcisakik rented two buses to take community members to Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation to see and hear about the successes of that community site development. Councillor Mary Jane Brazeau recalls, "I was impressed by their grassroots consultation process. Elders, parents, women and youth were listened to and they got what they wanted. Each age group was involved in the community planning process. We came back home thinking 'we can do that, we also can realize our dream.'"

Kitcisakik is also learning about planning models used by the Kanehsatake First Nation for co-management or shared land use agreements. This model is particularly relevant to the Kitcisakik situation, as three different planning systems may be considered, each with different jurisdictional levels and approaches:

- core community area with housing, commerce, institutions and infrastructure servicing that would only be used by the First Nation; the First Nation is now thinking about alternatives to the "reserve" concept for this core area;
- shared-use area within the immediate traditional area of Kitcisakik—this would probably need some form of shared use and/or co-management agreement with the provincial park; and
- Algonquin traditional territory—involving a broad planning perspective, along with other Algonquin First Nations.

Chief James Papatie.

Next Steps

In light of the unfavourable results from lac Wekwabiyak site tests, Kitcisakik has submitted a proposal to INAC to start a community-wide vision definition and master planning exercise. A community vision, village concept, community master plan and site identification could be finished by the end of 2003. INAC recently approved funding for this community master plan.

With all of these demanding tasks, Chief Papatie emphasizes that the most important and challenging task is to inspire and build confidence in the people of Kitcisakik. "Today our people must learn to express their dream. We've got to give them reason for hope, and the potential of moving to a new community site and involving the grassroots in the community planning process might help to do that."

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MOUNT CURRIE FIRST NATION

Housing Needs Drive Community Development

- Planning driven by housing needs
- Skills development
- Community consultation and commitment

Mount Currie First Nation is about 40 kilometres north of Whistler, British Columbia. In the early 1970s, housing conditions badly needed upgrading and expanding. However, funding was not approved because the existing community and available building sites were located within the floodplain. The process that started so housing conditions could be improved eventually led to the creation of a new settlement about seven kilometres from the original site. The development of a new community meant a chance to bring together cultural values and community involvement into daily life. From an aerial view, the layout is in the shape of an eagle's head. It was planned to give privacy and living space to residents. The First Nation found that the planning of one community component—housing—led to an opportunity for more comprehensive community planning.

On-reserve population	1,270
Reserve area	3,000 hectares
Townsite	Mount Currie First Nation
Region	British Columbia
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude.

MOUNT CURRIE FIRST NATION

Housing Needs Drive Community Development

Mount Currie First Nation is about 40 kilometres north of Whistler, British Columbia. In the early 1970s, housing conditions badly needed upgrading and expanding. However, funding was not approved because the existing community and available building sites were located within the floodplain. The process that started so housing conditions could be improved eventually led to the creation of a new settlement about seven kilometres from the original site. The development of a new community meant a chance to bring together cultural values and community involvement into daily life. From an aerial view, the layout is in the shape of an eagle's head. It was planned to give privacy and living space to residents. The First Nation found that the planning of one community component—housing—led to an opportunity for more comprehensive community planning.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Planning driven by housing needs
- Skills development
- Community consultation and commitment

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	1,270
Reserve area	3,000 hectares
Townsite	Mount Currie First Nation
Region	British Columbia
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude.

Milestones

1970s	Three potential sites assessed with community consultation.
1979-1980	Negotiations begin with INAC.
1983	Community develops plan for new site.
1984	Construction of homes begins; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation commits to help.
1984-87	About 100 homes are built within a 3-year period.
1987	New school opened.
1988-2003	Continued phased site development.

Developing Housing on Higher Ground

Mount Currie First Nation first tried to get funding to help with a severe lack of housing in the early 1970s. At the time, it was known that the community was in a floodplain area, between two rivers in the Pemberton Valley. To get funding, the First Nation had to look elsewhere, on higher ground within their 5,888 hectare reserve land.

Leonard Andrew, a community Councillor at the time was appointed to oversee the subdivision development. A planning committee was set up in 1979. A planning study was done in 1980 to look at other locations for a new settlement. More than 20 years later, and following terms as community Chief from 1981 to present, Andrew is still very involved in the development through his role as community Capital Projects Manager. According to Andrew:

> *"Housing in the 1970s on the Mount Currie Indian Band's reserve lands was developed sporadically, through the availability of minimal INAC funding. There was no community planning done for any capital projects, including housing. There was absolutely no input, especially by the housing recipients as to the type of housing unit to be considered and constructed. No lender would consider loaning the band any funds because the existing villages at that time were on the floodplain. The types of homes built reflect the subsidy INAC provided at the time, which was about $7,000 to $10,000 per home. Right from the beginning the band decided that we must build complete homes, not half-built structures."*

Andrew remembers the role of leadership in the early stages of planning. "The leadership at the time asked the community, including youth, Elders and others, to look at themselves and ask 'What are our basic needs? What do we want this new settlement to look like?'" Many of those original ideas can be seen in the community today and are planned for future phases of development. For example, the layout of the community is, from an aerial view, in the shape of an eagle's head. This is a concept suggested by a youth from the community during consultations at the local school. The community was also planned so that neighbours would not be "eyeball to eyeball" with one another, but rather have enough living space and privacy.

Integrated Community Development

Mount Currie First Nation had to plan for infrastructure and community facilities that would work with the new housing development. Andrew says:

> *"The funding for housing, infrastructure and schooling were all separate, but somehow needed to be brought together. The infrastructure requirements for the site were significant, including needs for roads, a bridge to the site, power supply, water, and sewage management facilities. In order to obtain the funding to construct these facilities we had to prove that we were committed and capable of doing so."*

Mount Currie First Nation responded to the challenge and did just that. Andrew remembers:

> *"The most challenging part of the process was negotiating with potential lenders for housing. I have to admit that at one point we had approached potential lenders in British Columbia and across the country without success. At the point we were about to give up, we finally made a breakthrough and obtained the necessary funds. Our leaders went to the community and said, 'If you make the commitment, we'll make the commitment.' Part of the commitment of community members in line for housing was that they would be required to pay rent until the loan for the home was paid off. Separate agreements would be established for each lot and home, and people would be required to commit a certain portion of their income, whatever that might be, to the housing program."*

In addition to securing a loan for housing, the band got funding from the federal government for subdivision servicing, infrastructure, a new school, a bridge and an access road.

Phased Subdivision Planning – Construction by Local Forces

The community collectively looked at three potential sites and decided on what is now the Xit'olacw Village. The village was planned with plans for residential construction phases. Between 1983 and 1987, 100 housing units were built. From 1988 to 1998, 88 more units were built. All of the housing units were built using local labour. Andrew explains:

> *"The band decided that we had to build our own homes, even if we had to train. We already had a number of carpenters, but most of them were working in the ski resort of Whistler, about 40 kilometres away. They all came back to help. Outside experts were also brought on reserve to train more carpenters, plumbers, electricians and so on. The band has trained up to 60 of its people this way."*

The Mount Currie Housing Board chooses housing recipients through its Housing Policy. The band administration processes all housing applications, plans, construction, rentals and maintenance. The recipients are involved in the planning from the beginning, including the choice of the housing plan. Changes are made if needed from the hundreds of plans available to the members.

Physical Development Plan

Part of the development's success depends on having serviced lots available before building the houses. This means an overall plan must be carried out. The band's Physical Development Plan (PDP) looks at the band's future plans for housing and infrastructure servicing. The PDP looks at land use constraints, population, housing, business, industry, economic development, water, sanitary, landfill, roads, band buildings, cultural and recreational facilities, school and flood and erosion control.

Continuing the Planning Process

Plans are now started to redevelop the other areas of the reserve for housing. Renovations have been ongoing in the older villages. Individual loans are now available for people who qualify to build on their own lots, even within the floodplain. Mount Currie now has a five-year initiative agreement with INAC to build, renovate and further train its people for housing. Through this initiative, the First Nation hopes to catch up on what Andrew refers to as "a continuous backlog of housing requirements."

Andrew reflects with satisfaction:

"Wow, I never thought we would accomplish all that we have. Creating a new community site seemed impossible at the time. More than 20 years later we can all look back and say, 'Once the people gave us the mandate we were able to take it on.' It's been an ongoing process and we've added on as we've been able. One of the keys for us has been to recognize and deal with the fact that the planning of one community component, such as housing, cannot take place without planning other components. We started with a project that was focused on housing, but when we fast-forward to the present and future, we see that facilities such as schools, health centres, recreational facilities and cultural centres are all part of the settlement. In the 1970s, many of our people lived in dilapidated housing. Much of our strength to overcome challenges stemmed from that ordeal. Today, as a result of our community development, many of our social problems have drastically decreased. The people of our community have been involved from the beginning in planning to live in the housing and setting of their choosing. It's made a real difference."

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MUSKEG LAKE CREE NATION

Collaborating Through Planning

- Strong relationship building, involvement in business community
- Building on early success
- Flexible planning to match other jurisdictions
- Long-term vision

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) is in northern Saskatchewan, about 93 kilometres north of Saskatoon. The First Nation has about 1,500 members, although only 230 of those members live within the community. Since the early 1980s, MLCN has succeeded in setting up a diverse economic base, much of which came from new lands for residential, commercial and industrial development. As part of the Treaty Land Entitlement Process, MLCN has acquired urban lands in Saskatoon. In developing these lands, MLCN has worked with the City of Saskatoon, and provincial and federal governments, in a co-ordinated planning process. The First Nation has met its development needs while working within, and complying with, other planning jurisdictions. MLCN is ready for continued successful community development, thanks to the capacities and knowledge gained.

On-reserve population	230
Reserve area	2,364.58 hectares
Townsite	Muskeg Lake Cree Nation
Region	Saskatchewan
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude.

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Seeking Opportunity in Urban Settings

One of the first urban planning initiatives done was the creation of an industrial park, the McKnight Commercial Centre. This process allowed the First Nation to create a base for economic development. In the process, it built capacities that allow it to take on other planning and economic development initiatives, such as the PetroCan Cree-Way gas bar and a plumbing and heating company in Saskatoon.

Cree-Way Gas Ltd. is a Petro Canada gas bar and convenience store owned by Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. It is located beside the new Cattail office/retail complex. Cree-Way Gas has created 20 jobs (8 full-time and 12 part-time positions) since it opened its doors on March 13, 2001.

Chief Gilbert Ledoux stresses the importance of long-term community vision:

> *"We always look at the future to what will benefit us and bring returns 5, 10, 15 years down the road. If you look around our community, we have limited opportunity. At the end of the day, our goal is to create jobs and opportunities for people in our home reserve. So, we picked Saskatoon as the urban setting to meet some of our goals. Our community frequently has people offering to partner with us, but we don't jump at every opportunity. We do our homework. In the case of Saskatoon, both they and we have had leadership changes, but the relationship was strong and persisted throughout. If the relationship is not there, roadblocks and barriers begin to take over. We make a point of being involved and are active members of the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce and the Saskatchewan Regional Economic Development Association."*

McKnight Commercial Property – Creating a Reserve for Light Industrial/Commercial use

In 1984, MLCN began negotiations with the City of Saskatoon, the Province of Saskatchewan, and Canada, for the transfer of a Crown-owned 14-hectare parcel of land on the eastern edge of Saskatoon. The First Nation's plan was to create a reserve that would be developed into an industrial park to generate revenue and support self-sufficiency. The process involved First Nation feasibility assessments, marketing strategies, site selection and development planning. It also involved integrating with established Saskatoon planning processes.

One of the key issues of transferring the land to reserve status was with the First Nation's access to Saskatoon's infrastructure services. Flexibility was required, both on the part of the First Nation and the city, and a mutually-agreeable arrangement was reached. The transfer making the property reserve land took place in 1988. A subsequent agreement in 1993 addressed the servicing issues, along with certain tax and jurisdictional matters such as land use and compatibility with the Saskatoon plan processes.

MLCN has sole jurisdiction over the land and has authority to impose bylaws to govern the land. In creating the McKnight Commercial Centre, the MLCN has agreed to adopt the laws of Saskatchewan and bylaws of the City of Saskatoon as a general guide to developing and managing the property. The zoning of the property allows for light industrial, commercial and/or institutional uses, but not for residential or heavy industrial uses.

Planning Pays Off

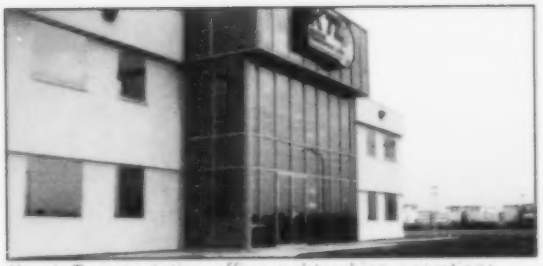
MLCN knows the benefits of carrying out a carefully-designed business park development plan. It offers community members business opportunities in a large urban market, something not available in their rural home community. Furthermore, thanks to its reserve status, the site offers a tax-free zone for First Nations.

Centre: Cattail Building One, leased to private businesses. The business complexes, Cattail Building One and Cattail Building Two, allow the opportunity for First Nation's businesses to be in an urban setting.

Cattail Building Two, leased to Saskatoon Tribal Council and private businesses in an adjoining strip mall.

Today there are $18 million worth of assets at the McKnight Commercial Property. This includes the land itself as well as infrastructure including a $3.5 million overpass, 25 percent of which was built by First Nation members. There are presently four industrial units and a service station taking up about one-third of the available space on the property. The units include transportation (trucking), offices and professional/retail spaces.

McKercher Drive highway exit to McKnight commercial property with the Veteran's Plaza in the background.



Kocsis Transportation office and trucking operations.

The Veteran's Plaza was the first facility built on the Reserve by Creek Investments Ltd. Creek Investments leases the land from Aspen Developments, another Muskeg Lake Cree Nation owned company. It leases about three acres of land for the Veteran's Plaza building, an office/retail center. Veteran's Plaza was named in honor of the many Muskeg Lake Cree Nation band members who enlisted in World War I and World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. It is a 52,000 square foot facility that has been 100% leased since 1999. There are about 11 tenants who lease space in the Veteran's Plaza.

Building on Success

Although the industrial park's development has been a long, hard task, the internal capacities that the First Nation has created will lead to more economic development. Lester Lafond, a community member and business advisor in the MLCN Economic Development Department, explains:

> *"The whole idea was for us to create a diverse revenue stream from the industrial park that could be used to fund other First Nation initiatives. The revenue generated has allowed one of our local plumbing companies to bid on large-scale projects in the North. This has been done with the financial security of bonding, which could not have been obtained without the success of the industrial park. Equally important for us has been the increased confidence our leadership has gained in dealing with landlord-tenant arrangements. We're now considering several other land developments that will build on this new knowledge."*

Willowgrove Development - Treaty Land Entitlement Enables Urban Residential Development

More recently, MLCN purchased a 52-hectare parcel of land on the east side of Saskatoon for residential development. This development will create a residential subdivision that could be used for reserve land, for resale purposes, or for a combination of both.

Some of the key issues to overcome include:

- high infrastructure servicing costs;
- comparability to off-reserve lands for residents; and
- multi-jurisdictional tax issues.

MLCN worked with the City of Saskatoon to create a vision for a flawless neighbourhood, made up of the MLCN residential development along with other neighbouring city areas. As with the McKnight Commercial Property, the Willowgrove residential development was planned to be consistent with city development and administration protocols. At the same time, it allows MLCN to adopt zoning, bylaws and tax systems.

Having gone through the process, MLCN adopted Saskatoon's planning standards to make sure the property maintained its best value. Ultimately, the decision was made to sell the property. Having developed the Willowgrove sites, MLCN has gained valuable planning experience and has also created revenue that can be used for other planning and development initiatives.

Relationships are key

Chief Ledoux believes that other First Nations can develop similar strategies for community and economic development by developing strong relationships with other jurisdictions, governments and partners. "Every First Nation is always looking for opportunities and return on investment. The bottom line goal is to employ people. The biggest message is to build strong relations with municipalities, provinces, the federal government and private sector partners."

MLCN has developed capacity in several key areas as a result of its property development activities. A reference document is available, called "Creating an Urban Residential Reserve, A Case Study and Capacity Building Initiative." It gives some background on the experiences of MLCN. Some of the areas where capacity has been developed include:

- planning;
- negotiation;
- contract development and administration;
- relationship building/management;
- lands administration;
- project and construction management;
- business development;
- financing;
- municipal zoning/services;
- taxes; and
- property management.

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Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation

Building a Community from Scratch

- Visionary leadership
- Determination
- Effective use of outside resources
- Blending tradition and innovation
- Financial management

Oujé-Bougoumou is in the James Bay Territory of Quebec. After being displaced from site to site over several decades, a permanent community was finally established during the early 1990s. Although there were advantages to creating a community from scratch, Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation had to plan all aspects of the community at once. This was an overwhelming challenge but Oujé-Bougoumou proved more than capable of meeting it. Through perseverance and determination, it developed solutions blending conventional technologies with innovation and tradition. The result, an award-winning community, is compatible with the surrounding land and with the culture of the people it serves.

On-reserve population	700
Reserve Area	To be determined
Townsite	Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation
Region	Quebec
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access
Climate zone	Code B: geographic location between 45 and 50 degrees latitude

OUJÉ-BOUGOUMOU CREE NATION

Building a Community from Scratch

KEYS TO SUCCESS

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Dislocation – People on the Move

For much of the last century, Oujé-Bougoumou Eenou were people in transition. Over 70 years ago, gold and copper prospectors entered the vast Oujé-Bougoumou traditional territory, which stretched over 2500 square kilometres in northern Quebec. Mining activities, camps, settlements and towns repeatedly displaced the First Nation settlement. Industrial activity also affected the environment, which disrupted the close relationship the Oujé-Bougoumou people had with the land and water. Hunting and trapping have always been an important part of their traditional way of life.

In the 1970s, the people of Oujé-Bougoumou realized that lands in their traditional territory were of much interest to entities such as government and private sector resource development corporations. To assert their presence, the people divided into six groups and spread out. They lived at camps throughout their traditional territory. This, however, led to problems with education, health, economic development and ongoing interpersonal, family and social situations.

In 1989 and 1992, Oujé-Bougoumou made agreements with the Province of Quebec and the Government of Canada securing financial contributions toward the construction of a permanent village. Jurisdiction over the traditional territory of Oujé-Bougoumou has never been let go. Even today, the First Nation continues to fight for its right to the land.

The new community site was built between 1991 and 1996. Two of the key leaders and advisors in Oujé-Bougoumou during the planning, creation and development of the village were Abel Bosum, the Chief at the time, and Paul Wertman. Bosum remembers:

> *"We came to realize very early in the planning of our new village that the process in which we were involved was in a sense like having a clean slate, a clean piece of paper upon which we were charged with the responsibility to write the first chapter of our community's future. We were not obliged to build the village in a particular way and we did not have any preconceived ideas about what was the best way to proceed. What we did have was a very profound sense of responsibility, which came from the fact that we all realized that we were building our new village not only for ourselves but also for the future generations of our people."*

Community Planning and Design – Creating an Inspiring Living Environment

From the beginning, community leaders knew how important effective community planning was, especially over time. Bosum explains:

> *"Our negotiations were essentially about costing out the implementation of a Community Master Plan. By tabling such a document we felt confident that we were in a position to implement a truly holistic and comprehensive plan. Further, we realized that by planning comprehensively we would also have the ability to include future operations and maintenance considerations in our decision-making. We were in a position to make decisions which would clearly reduce municipal maintenance costs while also conforming to community preference, respecting environmental requirements, and addressing cultural and aesthetic considerations as well."*

An important starting point was selecting the site. During negotiations with the federal and provincial governments, the people thought about what was important to them in creating their community. Six potential community sites were selected and evaluation criteria were established. The criteria included:

- suitability for construction;
- nearness to hunting territory;
- water quality;
- availability of fire wood;
- aesthetics and view; and
- accessibility.

The preferred site selected by the community was not acceptable to the province because of poor accessibility and related costs. Consequently, the second choice became what is now the site of Oujé-Bougoumou.

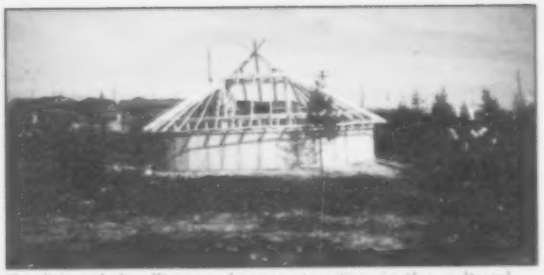
Many meetings were held to develop a community plan that would serve generations to come. Paul Wertman remembers the direction given by the Elders. "The community should be economically stable, non-destructive to the land, in harmony with the environment and not just a 'southern style' community imported to the North. What the vision really boiled down to is what is now referred to as 'sustainable development.'"

Physical model showing overall community layout.

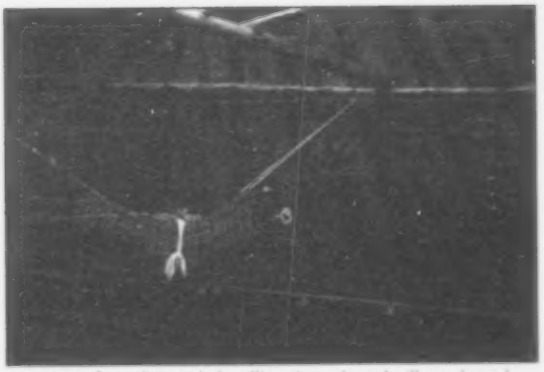
In keeping with this vision, the selected community site had several advantages for building an efficient community. The land is sandy and slopes gradually southward to the shore of Lake Opemiska. The sandy conditions allow for cost-effective construction, and the southern exposure allows passive solar heating of buildings. Service infrastructure has been designed to conform with the natural land to reduce construction and operating costs. This approach fits well with Oujé-Bougoumou's goals of minimizing environmental impacts and reducing energy use.

A master plan was created by building on the vision developed in community meetings and as articulated by the Elders. All of its parts contributed to a common theme—to create a social living environment that is compatible with the natural environment. Some parts of this plan that can be seen in the community include:

- a concentric road layout with most community facilities at the core;
- a "horizontal" architectural theme creating a deep connection to the earth by constructing buildings with bold roof lines and walls of minimal height; and
- an area set aside for traditional dwellings that are available for everyone to use and for educational purposes for visitors.



Traditional dwelling under construction in the cultural village beside the new community.



Interior of traditional dwelling in cultural village beside the new community.

Paul Wertman emphasizes that investing time, care and creativity can result in positive social outcomes. "Architecture is extremely important to a community. It can create a visual landscape that speaks to a people's cultural background. It can generate a feeling that inspires people to shape their lives to match. This was an extremely important lesson for us."

Oujé-Bougoumou hired an Aboriginal architect to work with them in both the community and building design.

Core area of new community showing common architecture of the church, administrative building and other public buildings.

Some community members needed time to adjust to life in a permanent village. After all, it was not very long ago that some hunting families would only enter towns or villages during the summer season. While the permanent village setting represented security, it also meant a change of lifestyle and way of thinking.

Vision

Much can be learned from the people of Ouje-Bougoumou and their experience of creating their community. Paul Wertman emphasizes that "a critical key to success is excellent leadership and consistent vision. It is also important to back up that vision with the practices, procedures and rules so that the community can withstand changes in leadership and personalities."

The vision that Ouje-Bougoumou adopted was one that would inspire its community members. To achieve that vision, a significant investment of resources, time, will and creativity was needed. Planning a community from the beginning has distinct advantages and challenges. Wertman sums it up when he says, "You can dream your dreams and the only limit is the resources at your disposal. The challenge is to modify your dream to adjust to the resources."

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SHARING THE STORY

NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

EXPERIENCES IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

Northern Aboriginal communities share several characteristics in how they take on and carry out community planning. Most Northern communities are remote, a factor that limits access, services and resources. Winter climates can be harsh and the land on which communities are built can be rugged. These factors significantly affect the planning of community infrastructure, amenities, housing and energy systems.

Community Structure

Except for the Hay River Dene Reserve, Northern Aboriginal communities are not reserves under the *Indian Act*. They are similar to municipalities, which have their land use planning, infrastructure, education, health and housing needs met as part of the normal operations of their local and territorial governments. Reserves operate under federal statutes, while Northern communities operate under the various statutes of the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.

Each of the 26 communities in Nunavut have elected councils and mayors. They act as municipalities under the Nunavut government. There are no bands. In the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, the communities have municipal councils and mayors or band councils and Chiefs. Some have both and in some, there are also elected Métis councils. The councils work together with senior levels of government on areas of common interest, including land use planning. Each of the territories have planning acts, which allow and create processes for community planning.

Northern Setting

Isolation, cold climate, natural environment and traditions strongly affect the planning and development of Northern communities. Most communities are not connected by year-round roads. The shipping and construction season is short. The climate is harsh and the landscape is easily damaged by human-made changes. Traditional settlement design and ways of life have to be accommodated, along with modern necessities, in planning and building Northern communities.

These communities need areas for housing, education, recreation and economic development. Each community may also set aside space for its own air strip, oil storage, dock, water supply, sewage lagoon and landfill site. Buildings and infrastructure are built to withstand the long cold winters without disturbing the permafrost. Areas are maintained for traditional activities and easy access to the hinterland.

Community Planning Process

Most Northern communities have land use plans and development regulations. These are often prepared by government planners or consultants, with input from the community. Both work closely with the local municipal and band councils, and with community members. Plans can be formal general plans and zoning bylaws, or simpler poster plans with displayed land use patterns and building regulations. Planning documents are often published in both English and the language of the First Nation and Inuit community.

Typically, Northern planning has been community-based. A local resident, who can work with the local language and traditions, is hired to help the planner gather information and set up community meetings. Large community base maps are often prepared to display the usual planning factors, such as topography, drainage and vegetation.

Using the same base maps, community members are invited to share their knowledge of the areas. They are asked to record important natural and traditional locations, their views on good and bad places to build, and their ideas for the future of their communities. Roads and spaces for future housing and other land use needs are added.

Natural Environment

Northern communities are also affected by the strong influence of natural resources and how they are managed, both environmentally and for economic development. Whether economic development is pursued through partnerships with outside private sector entities or developed internally, the main planning challenge is to strike a balance between development and preservation. Inuit and First Nations people are in a unique and invaluable position to find this balance because of their longstanding and strong connection to the land.

This theme area shares the community planning experience of three First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities: K'atl'odeeche First Nation, N'Dilo and Dettah of the Northwest Territories, and the Hamlet of Coral Harbour in Nunavut. **Figure 3** shows the location of each community.

Figure 3

K'ATL'ODEECHE FIRST NATION

Hay River Dene Reserve Community Planning Pays Off

The Hay River Dene Reserve is north of the 60th parallel on the south shore of Great Slave Lake. It is the only reserve in the Northwest Territories. K'atl'odeeche First Nation has about 525 members, with 270 of those living on the reserve. The First Nation is across the river from Hay River, a town of 4000 people. The town has both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. The First Nation was created in the early 1970s, in response to concerns of the K'atl'odeeche First Nation people about the infringement on their traditional territories. Initial development was based on the needs of the day. The First Nation then created a community plan based on input from community workshops. This was followed by the development of land use planning and zoning bylaws. One of the goals of the housing policy was to minimize the risk of flooding and reduce the cost of servicing. The First Nation has also worked on striking a balance between development and preservation. It has done so through a partnership with private industry to integrate traditional ecological knowledge with geographical information systems (GIS).

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Planning driven by environmental protection and improved community safety
- Combined traditional approaches with modern municipal land use and control
- Community members give direction to planning consultant
- Strong relationship with neighbouring municipality

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	270
Reserve area	13,500 hectares
Townsite	K'atl'odeeche First Nation – Hay River Dene Reserve
Region	Northwest Territories
Geographic zone	Code 1: located within 50 kilometres of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code E: geographic location between 60 and 65 degrees latitude

Using the same base maps, community members are invited to share their knowledge of the areas. They are asked to record important natural and traditional locations, their views on good and bad places to build, and their ideas for the future of their communities. Roads and spaces for future housing and other land use needs are added.

Natural Environment

Northern communities are also affected by the strong influence of natural resources and how they are managed, both environmentally and for economic development. Whether economic development is pursued through partnerships with outside private sector entities or developed internally, the main planning challenge is to strike a balance between development and preservation. Inuit and First Nations people are in a unique and invaluable position to find this balance because of their longstanding and strong connection to the land.

This theme area shares the community planning experience of three First Nations, Inuit and Northern communities: K'atl'odeeche First Nation, N'Dilo and Dettah of the Northwest Territories, and the Hamlet of Coral Harbour in Nunavut. **Figure 3** shows the location of each community.

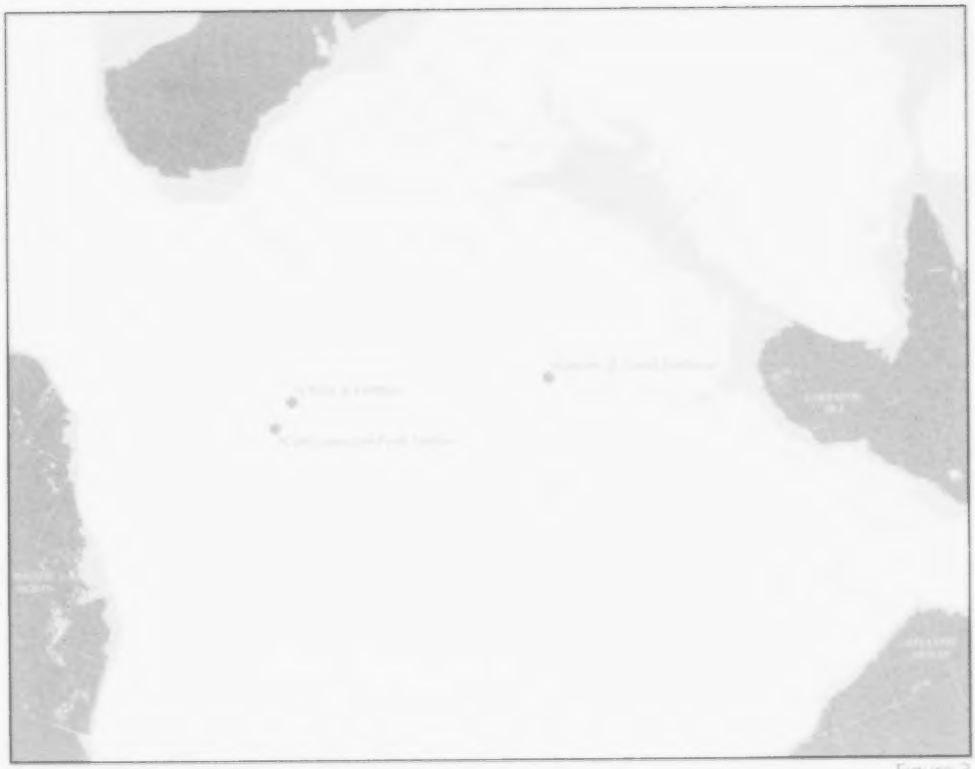

Figure 3

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The Hay River area was used as a travel way and hunting and fishing grounds by the Dene people for centuries. It was not until the 1890s that a permanent settlement was set up. Hay River is known as an active base for commercial fishing on Great Slave Lake. This is also known as a major transportation hub for the MacKenzie Valley. In 1949, the first all-weather road linking the area to the south was built. In the 1960s, the development of a Cominco lead-zinc mine 97 kilometres to the east led to a rail line including a link to Hay River. The Coast Guard of Canada has also used Hay River as a harbour.

Developing a Community

Cynthia James is the manager of the Naegha Zhia Corporation, Hay River First Nation's economic development corporation. As a result of her job, and being raised in the community, James is familiar with the history and patterns of growth. She is also familiar with the community planning process because of the regular interaction with the community Lands and Trusts Department. Delores Fabien, manager of the department, is responsible for community planning and the leasing of property.

James recounts how the community was developed:

> *"In recent history, the east side of the river has been occupied by the people of our First Nation, with the west side being settled by a combination of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. In 1963, there was a flood that caused many people on both sides of the river to move upstream. At the time, INAC was involved in the relocation project and I have to say there wasn't any planning in the process. Twenty houses were plunked down along the river bank and that was it. Many of our people chose to remain living at the river mouth."*

> *"Then, in the early 1970s, there was a proposal to develop a harbour on our lands at the mouth of the river. We were quite concerned because the mouth of the river is a prime fishing area for us. Furthermore, the proposed development would have encroached on a cemetery area. When the Chief at the time caught wind of the proposed harbour, he decided that something had to be done. So Chief Daniel Sonfrere, and then Councillors Jim Lamalice, Pat Bugghins and the late Ted Buggins began the process of negotiating for the creation of the reserve where we live today."*

Foreground: Preserved waterfront area of K'atl'odeeche First Nation. Background: the Hay River Harbour and shipping yard.

Planning Process Starts with Community Members

In 1974, a 135 square kilometre parcel of land stretching along the east side of the Hay River became reserve land. At first, community development went ahead according to needs of the day. Then, in the early 1980s, the First Nation hired an economic development planner. According to James, "It turned out to be a very good thing. Our people said 'This is what we want' and based on their direction our consultant put pen to paper to structure the thoughts into a community plan."

The plan was developed based on community workshops. James says:

"People commented on the business initiatives they wanted to pursue, their views on residential space requirements and areas they felt should be set aside for future use. They decided that the business core should be set aside as a separate area, but that it should be kept close and accessible. The core is now located about 10 kilometres inland from the mouth of the river. Similarly, we wanted our community core area to be central, so it was placed between the two main residential areas. The school, daycare, community centre, fire hall and the store/gas bar are all in the core area since all are central services."

Ehdah Cho Store and gas bar in K'atl'odeeche First Nation

Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan for K'atl'odeeche First Nation was prepared between 1994 and 1997. It outlines the First Nation's policies for dealing with community growth and land development on the Hay River Reserve for a 15-year period. The plan presents a picture of how the community is expected to develop, based on a study of current land uses, biophysical and ecological studies, and anticipated developments.

K'atl'odeeche First Nation Fire Hall

Chief Lamalice Community Centre

Typical residential area in K'atl'odeeche First Nation

To complete the plan, the First Nation got help from a private sector planning firm that worked under the direction of Council and with the advice of the Northwest Territories' Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. The plan's goals were to:

- make sure land developments conform with plan policies;
- make sure that all developments are environmentally sensitive to the limitations of the land to preserve and enhance the reserve for future generations;
- develop a community that respects traditional values and accommodates traditional activities;
- develop a community that meets the needs of the existing residents and is flexible to respond to changing conditions;
- make sure there is always enough land to meet planned community needs; and
- preserve the important cultural and historic features of the reserve.

Land use zones were set up and supporting goals and development policies created. Permitted and discretionary land uses were also identified. The land use zones include:

- housing;
- industrial;
- cottages;
- community use;
- commercial;
- environmental;
- recreational;
- transportation; and
- community forest.

Newly chip-sealed street in K'atl'odeeche First Nation

Housing was spread along a main road joining new and old parts of the community. Part of the housing policy encouraged new residential development in the new area, to minimize the risk of flooding and to reduce the cost of servicing.

The band council created and passed zoning bylaws. The bylaws include administration and zoning provisions as well as enforcement processes. There are also flood risk provisions to promote public health, safety and welfare.

Traditional Territory Planning

K'atl'odeeche First Nation is also active in planning and management activities in its traditional territory. James says, "The Buffalo Lake area is an important part of our traditional territory because historically it's been a winter hunting ground for our people. We've also done some residential and cottage development in the Sandy Creek area. We've developed a biophysical characterization of the different types of land in our territory so that we're better able to manage and make decisions."

Private Sector Partnership-Sharing Planning Knowledge

Like many Northern locations, K'atl'odeeche First Nation is defined by its remoteness, its close proximity to a major non-Aboriginal townsite and the presence of resource-based development in the area. One major planning issue for many First Nations is the challenge of preserving the environment and traditional ways within the context of modern society and economic development. The First Nation has taken positive steps to strike a balance between development and preservation.

Joining Traditional Ecological Knowledge with Western Science

Traditional knowledge plays an important part in the First Nation's planning process. It is the community's aim to find new ways of joining traditional knowledge with western science. The greater goal, however, was to improve communications and information so that economic development could co-exist with the natural and cultural environment.

From 1999 to 2002, Fabian worked from the office of an oil and gas company in Calgary through a training and development program. During that time, the company was using a proprietary GIS software tool to manage pipeline integrity. It was developed into a new package that would let First Nations superimpose planning information within its traditional territories over other information gathered by industry and government. The collaboration broke new ground for both K'atl'odeeche and the private sector company. Fabian recalls, "In the beginning, neither our First Nation nor the company knew what to expect because the process was new. One of the key things we found out was that the tool we were developing showed great promise for improving communication."

Applying the Process to Land Management

Fabian returned to his community to use the GIS tool in his community. An environmental resource and planning database was created for the Hay River Dene traditional territory. The development of the database was funded by industry and government. According to Fabian:

> *"The way we look at it, industry and government provides us information so that we can develop a resource base to the benefit of all. By superimposing our TEK and traditional knowledge in the picture, we are able to provide a service to our community to ensure that we've done an independent and honest assessment of activities occurring within our traditional territory. The visual aspect of the tool also proved to be helpful in enhancing community involvement, especially with the elders. In this way, TEK is incorporated into the mainstream environmental assessment process. We are careful, however, to ensure that the TEK and harvesting information is kept confidential."*

Building Relationship is Important in the North

James says that building relationships is very important for a Northern First Nation's planning process. "We live by different rules in the North. For many years we were the only reserve in the Northwest Territories. We are located alongside a municipality and it makes perfect sense to enhance one another rather than detract. That is our goal."

Both the town and the First Nation have their own community plans and planning processes, but share information openly. Hay River is in the First Nation's traditional territory, so communication and consultation is very important. James says the relationship is a strong one. "We have a non-voting seat on their chamber of commerce, so that helps us to keep up on things. The town consults us about the development that occurs within our traditional territory, so the relationship works well."

K'atl'odeeche First Nation Administration Centre

Evidence of Success

Cynthia James says that careful community planning has paid off for the K'atl'odeeche First Nation:

> *"The planning process has worked very well for us and the results show in our community. Our people gave our planner clear direction and he's done a great job of putting the plan to paper and working out the technical details. Now we have a plan that is our guide and a communication tool for our departments to be sure that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing."*

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N'DILO AND DETTAH – YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION

Practicality in the North

- Simple yet comprehensive approach
- Poster board format
- Partnership with neighbouring municipality

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation has two communities, N'Dilo and Dettah, on Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories. The First Nation does not have a legislated authority. This has shaped its approach to planning. It is not a reserve under federal legislation and is not a municipality under the territorial government. Nevertheless, the planning process at N'Dilo and Dettah has been in effect for some time. Plans in report format have been replaced by poster plans. These posters show a map of the community, are colour-coded and include quick notes showing land use, restrictions under designated areas and facility sites. The First Nation's long term plans are to use the Treaty Land Entitlement Process to go after self government.

On-reserve population	519
Reserve area	To be determined
Townsite	N'Dilo and Dettah – Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Region	Northwest Territories
Geographic zone	Code 1: located within 50 kilometres of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
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One First Nation, Two Communities

N'Dilo means "end of the island" and takes up the end of Latham Island, within the municipal bounds of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. It was established when the gold mines of Yellowknife were active and has grown to near capacity, with only 16 building lots remaining.

Dettah means "the burnt place" and is across the bay from Yellowknife. It is 11 kilometres from Yellowknife by winter road, 21 kilometres by summer road, and was a Dene settlement long before Yellowknife existed.

The Yellowknives' Dene First Nation has about 1100 members. The population is split up almost evenly between N'Dilo, Dettah, Yellowknife and elsewhere.

Betwixt and Between—No Legislative Authority

Yellowknives' Dene do not have a legislative authority for governance right now. They are not a reserve under the *Indian Act*, and the community does not have status as a municipality within the Northwest Territories. David Kravitz, Chief Executive Officer, says that the First Nation is going after self-government under the Treaty Land Entitlement Process. A Framework Agreement on Treaty Entitlement was signed in 2001.

Poster-plan Format

David Kravitz is responsible for community planning at N'Dilo and Dettah. Kravitz explains that the planning process has been in effect for quite some time now:

> *"The planning process was well under way by the 1980s. N'Dilo is now on the third revision of its community plan and Dettah is on its second. We changed the format of the plans in recent years. Previously we produced our plans in booklet format, but our last two have been in poster format. The posters show the communities, are colour-coded and include quick notes for land uses, restrictions within designated areas and general siting of facilities. The plans are essentially guides, not zoning bylaws."*

By refining the poster plans, the First Nation can display its vision and goals, future land use plans and development standards on a page for staff, government and developers to use. These snapshots of the future are finished after running a community participation program, using local facilitators. The product is simple, but the process is just as comprehensive as more formal plans and bylaws used in larger communities in terms of community involvement and political debate. The plans are approved by Council resolution.

Poster Plan

The poster plan has a land use plan, zoning uses and restrictions, and land use goals and principles. Zoning restrictions include:

- minimum lot size and road width;
- fire separation;
- setbacks from property line, bush, high water mark and waste management areas; and
- building and entrance orientation to reduce concerns associated with snow drifting.

The land use goals help determine the best use for community land within restrictions of terrain, geology, existing infrastructure, cost and community interests. The land use plan helps the communities of N'Dilo and Dettah develop in an orderly way. The plan aims to create a healthy, safe, and beautiful community for the people who live and work there. Some of the land use statements listed on the poster plan include:

- support future rural residential development along the Dettah Road in an organized and phased manner;
- maintain undisturbed areas of archeological or historical significance;
- improve and design roads to minimize snow drifting;
- build or improve the drainage systems to handle spring runoff, and reduce erosion damage to roads and building sites;
- keep open space along waterfront; and
- put community use sites near the center of the community.

Dettah poster plan

N'Dilo poster plan

Carrying out and Updating the Plans

Applicants for residential or other developments make submissions to the manager of Community Development for review. Proposals for land development must be consistent with the community plans. They must also show that servicing, environmental and cultural issues have been addressed. If issues are not resolved with the manager, variance applications are presented to Council for final review and approval. Council will accept the variance, reject it, or attempt to find an appropriate alternative site.

Kravitz says that the Yellowknives Dene First Nation has recently updated its community plans with help from Yellowknife-based professional planners. The community consultation process for developing the plans involves presentations and discussion sessions at the housing office. There are also door-to-door consultations and one-on-one drop-in sessions.

Yellowknives Dene First Nation has a memorandum of understanding with the City of Yellowknife to share planning and budgetary information. Meetings are held each year to talk about planning. There are also talks about a Municipal Services Agreement.

Lands and Environment

The Lands and Environment Department was established in 1998 in response to increasing demands on Yellowknives Dene lands by external users. These included mineral exploration and mining companies. The department reviews applications from prospective land users. It finds potential environmental impacts from the proposed land use and finds ways to best protect the land. The department has received about 150 to 200 proposals from many sources including Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, Science Institute of Northwest Territories, Prince of Wales Heritage Centre, MacKenzie Valley Land and Water Board, MacKenzie Valley Environmental Assessment Review Board, mining and exploration companies, and the public. The department is sometimes involved in more major developments such as the Diavik and BHP diamond mines.

The Lands and Environment Department is also helping with research and giving guidance on land issues about the Treaty Land Entitlement Process.

Economic Development – Re-investing in the Community

Deton'Cho Corporation is the main economic development arm of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. The corporation aims to set up profitable subsidiaries and joint ventures that create jobs and stimulate community development. Deton'Cho Corporation looks for niches in existing markets of both traditional and modern Northern economies. Collaborations with other Dene and First Nation communities are encouraged.

In 2000 to 2001, Deton'Cho invested about $350,000 in employee training. Sixty employees finished training, which included diamond cutting and polishing, safety training, fire suppression, first aid, truck driving and heavy equipment operation, finance, and administration. In addition, capital is reinvested in the community, including buildings, equipment, road development, and the construction of a diamond manufacturing facility.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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HAMLET OF CORAL HARBOUR

Originality and Resource Management

- Capitalizing on local opportunity for sustainable economic development
- Setting achievable goals as a starting point
- Effective resource management

Coral Harbour is an Inuit hamlet on Southampton Island at the top of Hudson Bay. The community is governed by a mayor and council and has about 750 community members. Coral Harbour has created a community plan and bylaws to guide its development. The planning process is enhanced by a strong working relationship with the Kivalliq Inuit Association and the Nunavut Impact Review Board. One of the community's most successful economic development ventures is Canada's only commercial caribou harvest. The harvest employs about 50 people in the community and generates about $750,000 each year.

Population	750
Land base area	11,900 hectares
Townsite	Hamlet of Coral Harbour
Region	Nunavut
Geographic zone	Code 4: The hamlet has no year-round road access to a service centre and, as a result, experiences a higher cost of transportation
Climate zone	Code F: geographic location greater than 65 degrees latitude

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The Community Plan

The Hamlet of Coral Harbour created a Community Planning and Zoning Bylaw to run the community development process, including land use planning to meet social, cultural, environmental and economic needs. As part of this process, a land use plan was developed and eventually became the basis for the community plan. The plan, which was updated in 1999, follows a land use and zoning bylaw system and has a 20-year scope.

Due to increasing housing development by the Nunavut Housing Corporation in Coral Harbour, the community plan will probably have to be updated sooner than the original 20-year time frame. The community plan was developed jointly by a consultant with the community and the hamlet lands administrator. The planning process started with the land use plan, with policy sections being added later based on community input. A zoning bylaw was added in 1999 to allow for plan enforcement. The community plan was prepared in a poster-board format with supporting documents.

The original version of the community plan was prepared in 1997, but the refinement and approval process took about two years. Ningeongan recalls:

"Our community consultation process was relatively straightforward so our main focus was on the agency provisions that were required. In particular, the Nunavut Impact Review Board, Nunavut Water Board and other agencies were involved. The Community Government and Transportation Department helped out a lot with the wording of the plan and with ongoing support. We now interact mostly by phone, but once a year we meet in our community to discuss planning matters and to maintain land inventories. The Community Plan only deals with the hamlet itself, not the rest of the island which is administered by the Kivalliq Inuit Association and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada."

Western view of Coral Harbour

Northern view of Coral Harbour

Ronnie Ningeongan has been the Coral Harbour Community Lands Administrator for the past six years. Ningeongan explains the planning process, "We previously had a land use plan, primarily for residential and commercial uses. We upgraded that to a community plan with zoning bylaws so that we would have an enforceable plan for our growing population. This protects the best interests of our community."

Development Approvals

Ningeongan explains that one of the plan's key terms is that designated areas are set aside for residential and commercial development:

"Proposed housing or commercial developments come across my desk first for screening purposes. In the end though, it is our hamlet council that is the ultimate decision-maker as they approve all applications from the public. The land is typically Commissioner's Land, administered by the Government of Nunavut, so we get lease agreements registered with the land titles office in Iqaluit. Lately there hasn't been much private development though. In the past three years we've constructed about seven houses, all of which were constructed by the Nunavut Housing Corporation."

Eastern view of Coral Harbour with nursing station (center)

Planning in the North

Ningeongan doesn't feel that the planning process is significantly different in the North:

"Yes, we have a very short season for construction, which basically runs from mid-August to the end of October, but it really doesn't affect our community planning. If there's one main difference, I would say that it has to do with the lengthy period of time is takes to address environmental issues. For instance there are old military sites with various environmental issues that haven't been cleaned up or resolved for more than 50 years."

Community Development Corporation

At Coral Harbour, the Northern setting has had a great impact on the nature of economic development. Richard Connelly of the Community Development Corporation explains:

"The people of Coral Harbour are known as being innovative, aggressive and vital. Once they latch onto something, they stick to it. We realize that we have to look to what is around us to create opportunity, because business won't just come our way. We had a business feasibility report prepared by a Vancouver consultant which identified many good ideas for economic development, but we realized that there was no way that we'd be able to get the money for all of them. So, we picked out some smaller achievable parts of the study to start with and to build credibility. In February of 2001, the Mayor called together a group of community members for an informal meeting to discuss the many ideas that people had for community development. Economic development was the central focus because we realize the importance of creating opportunity for our youth as they come out of high school. It was decided that we needed a 'catch all' organization to identify multiple funding sources that would be necessary for development projects. That's when the Community Development Corporation was created."

Caribou Harvesting

Ten or fifteen business development ideas were considered. Creating a commercial caribou harvesting venture emerged as one of the more prominent options.

The caribou of Coral Harbour are confined to the island, so their population is manageable. In the early 1960s, the caribou population was eliminated due to over-hunting. Twenty-four caribou were brought from Coats Island to re-establish the population. By the late 1980s, the population had grown to between 30,000 to 60,000 caribou, and hunting restrictions were gradually lifted.

The caribou herd was growing too fast and had to be controlled. In the late 1990s, the commercial caribou harvest was started and the meat was sent exclusively to a small meat processing plant in Rankin Inlet. In 1999, about 60,000 to 80,000 pounds of meat were produced by Coral Harbour. By 2003, the production level increased to about 275,000 pounds. Connelly says:

> *"The Government of Nunavut, Department of Sustainable Development has been tremendously supportive, both in terms of the economic development and the biological management of the caribou. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is also involved on a contract basis to inspect the meat and ensure that federal regulations for the handling of food are adhered to."*

Future Planning

Ningeongan doesn't see any significant changes for the planning process for the community core except maybe updating the community plan. Ningeongan feels that the process is working well. "Our community plan is primarily based on the generic model of the *Nunavut Planning Act*. Perhaps other larger communities need to refine that model to suit their purposes, but for us it's worked well in its basic form. Next year we'll be doing our five-year review, and we'll reassess whether we need to make any refinements at that time."

Outside the community core, Richard Connelly sees big changes taking place in the planning and management of the caribou harvest:

> *"The biggest change for us recently is to work with the Rankin Inlet processing plant to collectively upgrade our operations to meet the standards of the European Union. We're going through some growing pains in terms of meeting these standards, but are confident that it will help to open further markets to us. At the same time we're looking at value added processes such as the sale of by-products to the domestic and international markets. We're looking at the possibility of using the felt from antlers to produce blankets or boot liners. Our work is seasonal, so we're constantly looking for innovative ways to create opportunities."*

Excerpts from Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw

The community plan and zoning bylaw documents will be used to help create a community that is safe, functional and attractive.

According to the *Nunavut Planning Act*, both the community plan and zoning bylaw must be reviewed and updated through a comprehensive process every five years.

Excerpt from a Community Newsletter

A community-based plan can:

- Prepare for the future
- Provide local control
- Save money
- Avoid land use conflicts
- Protect important areas
- Deal with environmental concerns

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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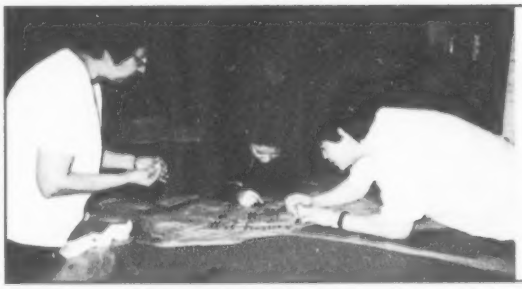
SHARING THE STORY



RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

EXPERIENCES IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

First Nation communities in Canada exist in a variety of rural and urban settings. A rural First Nation community usually has a small population and low-density development. There is often individual lot-by-lot servicing for water and wastewater infrastructure. In some cases there is a higher density core area with concentrated infrastructure and development. Urban First Nations can either be an urban community by themselves or they can be categorized as urban because they are integrated with a surrounding urban environment.

SOME KEY FACTORS THAT MAY DIFFERENTIATE URBAN AND RURAL FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES INCLUDE:

- availability of internal resources and expertise;
- access to external resources and expertise;
- reliance on natural resources;
- availability and scale of infrastructure services;
- types of economic development opportunities; and
- social and cultural influences.

A Planning Approach to Suit the Situation

One of the most significant factors that determines the best planning approach for a community is how it views its current and desired situation. This will determine how it grows, develops and interacts with other First Nations, governments and private sector entities.

Rolling River First Nation, in southern Manitoba, is a small rural community with relatively sparse development. The people of the community do not have a strong need to centralize. The community is used to this type of culture and lifestyle, and plans to keep its rural setting. They do not feel that they have a large enough population to warrant centralization for business purposes alone.

Samson Cree Nation in central Alberta also has a rural setting. However, growth in the community has meant a shift toward the main townsite and an urban development standard. The First Nation has developed a community plan and is now carrying it out.

In Atlantic Canada, a number of small rural First Nation communities have combined resources to create a community planning process that benefits all. The Joint Community Planning Committee created the First Nations Community Planning Model in 2008. This seven-step model has been tested in three First Nation pilot communities.

In recent decades, the First Nation community of Tsleil-Waututh in British Columbia has been surrounded by increasing urban development in Vancouver. Rather than just observing, the community is playing an active role in the planning and development in the urban area. This approach has been particularly successful for the First Nation because it has been able to establish strong working relationships with the City of Vancouver and private sector development partners. See **Figure 4** for the location of these communities.

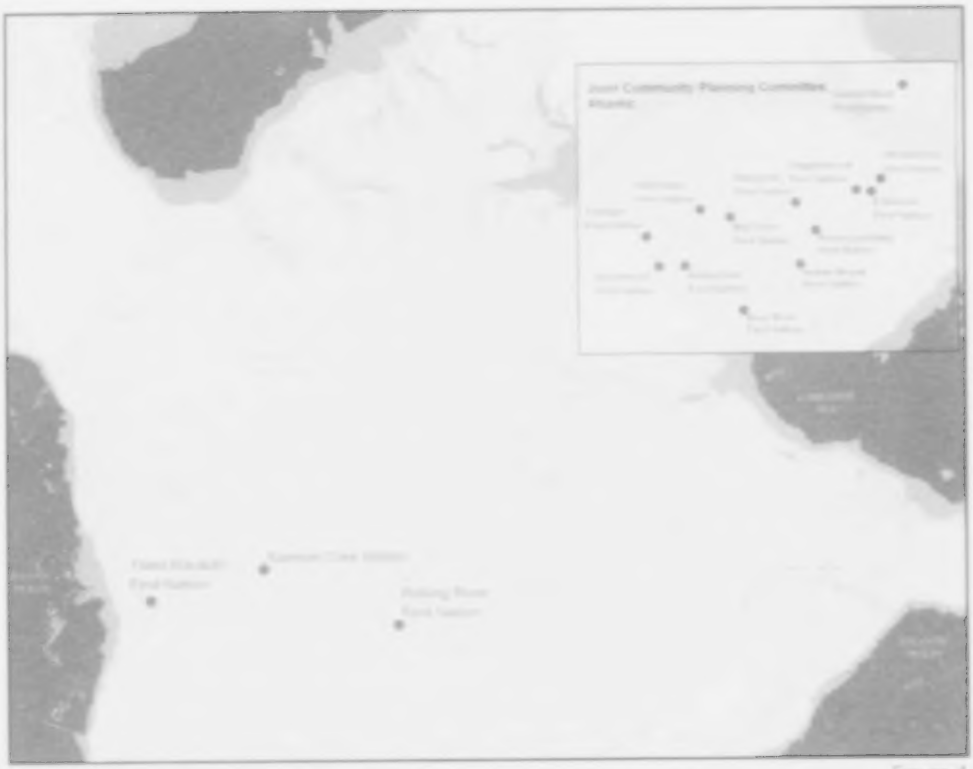


Figure 4

Drawing on Planning Models and Partnerships

Whether in a rural or urban setting, a First Nation community can establish a strong planning process. They can use existing planning models or different ones created to match unique circumstances. Partnerships with other First Nations, governments, private sectors entities, and academic institutions can greatly strengthen the planning process. The rural and urban First Nations profiled here show how effective planning models and partnerships can be.

ROLLING RIVER FIRST NATION

—*Planning for Economic Development*

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Focus on economic development
- Strong leadership
- Skills development and capacity building

Rolling River First Nation is south of Riding Mountain National Park in rural Manitoba. The community of 500 has a low residential density and little commercial development. Community planning initiatives are focused on economic development opportunities. A community meeting was held to encourage members to contribute their ideas. Next they took an inventory of the community's human resources. The First Nation focused first on opportunities that could be carried out with existing resources and those connected to available funding programs. In 1998, Rolling River signed a Treaty Entitlement Agreement which led to more possibilities for development. The community's long-term goals include reaching 95 percent employment levels while following sustainable development guidelines. These guidelines reflect community values, protect cultural and ecological integrity, and make sure there is a community review and approval process.

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	500
Reserve area	5,610 hectares
Townsite	Rolling River First Nation
Region	Manitoba
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude.

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In 1998, Rolling River signed a Treaty Entitlement Agreement that allows it to acquire up to 19,084 hectares of new reserve land. The Province of Manitoba is giving 954 hectares, and the federal government will give funding to purchase more lands since there isn't enough Crown land available.

Rolling River First Nation is a rural community with relatively low housing and building densities. Community members are comfortable in the rural setting and would like to keep that lifestyle. There are no plans to build up a central core. However, economic development is a strong part of community vision.

Leaders Focus on Economic Development

In 1998, Morris Shannacappo was elected Chief of Rolling River First Nation. Chief Shannacappo's father was involved in community politics for many years before, so Shannacappo knew the challenges of planning for a small rural community with limited resources. "I grew up with politics," he says. He goes onto explain:

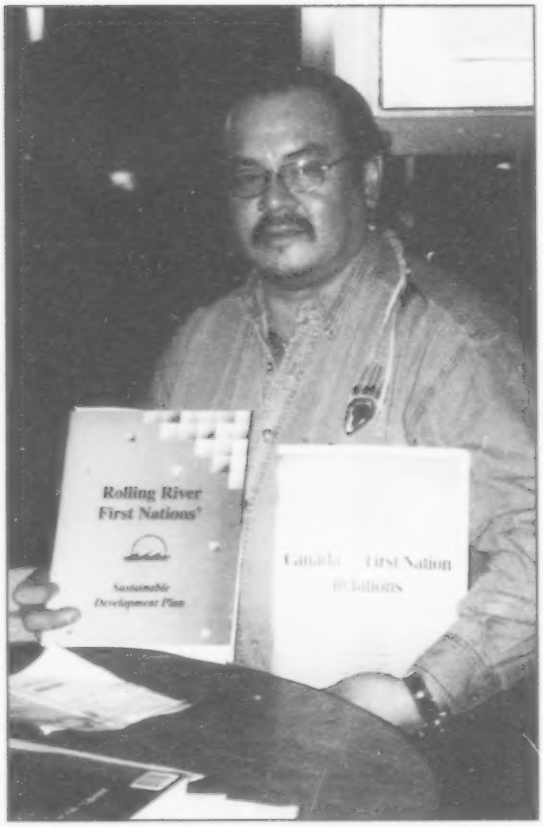
> *"I always heard of the problems our community was having due to inadequate funding. That's likely why I'm so focused on economic development. Before becoming Chief, I was involved in the creation of an organization called Volunteers United. The organization held bingo events and other fund raisers to assist with some of the issues that our band office cannot provide for, such as funerals and other small bread and butter type issues. In the years leading up to my becoming Chief, I gained a seven-year background in economic development. After the work done by others before me, I feel it's my era and my time to put a roof on that, with economic development and capacity building, so that our people understand business. That means everything from financial practices to feasibility assessments, right through all the development stages leading to opening the door of the business."*

Restoring Economic Spirit

Soon after the election, Chief Shannacappo called a community meeting to find out what direction the people wanted to take:

> *"We advertised the meeting as an unveiling of our Master Plan to generate interest. We had a very good turn out and the people were asked a very simple question 'How do you envision your community developing?' Our job was really to listen. In the end our scribe had written about eight pages of notes on the ideas of the people. After the meeting we followed up by doing a human resources check. We wanted to know what skills were available in the community and how they might have to be enhanced to implement some of the ideas put forth. We mostly pursued those that we could implement immediately or with minimal training. Eventually we were able to tie in these initiatives with economic resources that were available to us."*

Chief Shannacappo gives examples of the programs that were tapped into. "We made use of the Welfare Reform Work Opportunity Program and the Aboriginal Forestry Program which provided us with some seed money. Our time and costs are always completely accounted for so that we're sure to be viewed as a success story in the eyes of those administering these types of programs."



Chief Morris Shannacappo with *Sustainable Development Plan* and *Canada - First Nation Relations Report*.

Long-Term Vision and Planning

In 1998 and 1999, Rolling River First Nation produced two key documents that would chart the course of their future. One was the *Sustainable Development Plan* and the other was *Developing Economic Capacity for Rolling River First Nation—Ten Year Plan, Final Strategy*. The following excerpts from these documents show a sense of the spirit in which they were produced:

"The community development process begins with a clear vision to accomplish an impossible task, against all odds, and the desire, commitment to make it real, regardless of the personal cost."

"The sustainable development project will consult with various departments and agencies of the First Nations governmental structures in Manitoba and Canada. It must be recognized that First Nations government has a major stake in sustainability and economic development, due in part to the disparity between mainstream and First Nations conditions. The major focus is to promote, improve and enhance the existing socio-economic spectrum."

"The main vision includes the complete development of the sustainable and economic development plan, which will be community-based, community-owned and managed by the First Nations in all regards. Moreover, this plan will be founded upon stewardship principles and practices of the First Nations culture. Thus, ensuring the protection of our natural resources, while maintaining an increased capacity for comprehensive knowledge and skill acquisition."

The *Sustainable Development Plan* sets out the goals of the sustainable and economic development projects, then proceeds to develop economic strategies. Here are the long-, medium- and short-term goals of the plan:

Long-term goal – To employ 95 percent of the total employable population of Rolling River First Nation.

Medium-term goal – To develop a 10-year plan that identifies sustainable development projects that are community-based, community-moved and community-driven.

Short-term goal – To develop an action plan that supports the medium- and long-term goals. To create a collective community process that identifies sustainable initiatives that reflect the desires of community members. To identify plans and goals that can happen with the existing resources of Rolling River First Nation.

The *Sustainable Development Plan* is Rolling River's community plan. It was prepared with input from community members, Chief and Council, and both local and external professionals. There are four main parts of the Rolling River community vision:

- stewardship, connection to the land—spiritual/cultural/language;
- human capacity—education/learning/skill development training;
- physical activity and economic resource development; and
- team building/community building/unity/synergy.

A community profile was developed to create a base for planning. The profile considered:

- the political setting;
- the situation and condition of community housing;
- water services and quality;
- waste and garbage disposal;
- transportation of dangerous goods and hazardous material;
- environmental conditions (water, soil, air, climate);
- policing/fire protection;
- community emergency preparedness;
- education, employee/income;
- culture and recreation;
- youth/women programs;
- social disturbances (traditional roles, assimilation pressures, social problems);
- resources;
- existing land (uses and potentials); and
- soils, vegetation and land production.

The *Sustainable Development Plan* also includes a community round table to talk about community values, ideologies, laws, social roles and decision-making structures. Strategies were developed for:

- protecting cultural integrity and resource capacities;
- the character and scale of community development;
- development guidelines, including community review and approval processes;
- maintaining ecological integrity;
- economic renewal;
- safety of community residents and visitors; and
- infrastructure and maintenance.

Putting the Strategies in Place

Some of the projects that are being done include:

- log house building;
- aquaculture;
- eco-tourism;
- ranching;
- trucking;
- gas station complex; and
- South Quill Computer Systems.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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SAMSON CREE NATION

Creating an Urban Townsite in a Rural Setting

The Samson Cree Nation (SCN) is in central Alberta, 50 kilometres south of Edmonton. Most of the 5,800 members are spread out over its land base. Over the years, SCN realized that settlement practices in the community cannot continue to rely on rural land for housing. The First Nation's community development plan aims to prevent further fragmentation of land base. They will do this by creating a welcoming urban environment that reflects the culture and needs of its members. New residential development will take place within the urban townsite area. The urban area will also include commercial development, shopping facilities, highway commercial development, job opportunities, and improved services and amenities.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Co-ordinated planning function
- Defined planning process
- Commitment and perseverance

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	5,800
Reserve area	14,148 hectares
Townsite	Samson Cree Nation
Region	Alberta
Geographic zone	Code1: located within 50 kilometers of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude

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A Dispersed Population

The SCN is made up of about 13,800 hectares north of the Battle River and an additional 227 hectares south of the river, known as the "Pugh" property. In addition to reserve-designated land, the community also has about 121 hectares of land west of Alberta Highway 2A, a titled land parcel under the municipal jurisdiction of the County of Ponoka.

About 80 percent of members live in the rural area on sites of 5 or more acres. The remaining 20 percent live in the townsite of Samson. The current population is 5800 and the growth rate is expected to be greater than the 5 percent experienced in recent years. This high growth potential has created a major wait for housing. It is partly because of the many returning band members and the fact that 75 percent of members are under the age of 30.

Creating a Planning Team – "Pulling in the Same Direction"

About 20 years ago, the First Nation had active housing plans, a recreation committee, commercial and economic development initiatives, groups interested in cultural, education, agricultural interests and utilities and ongoing capital works. At that time, some felt that these various initiatives were each going in different directions. The community planning process began at that time when community members decided it was time to co-ordinate these initiatives.

First, all administration staff were brought on board to talk about big picture issues. Several staff members attended a three-week course on community planning in First Nation communities at the University of British Columbia. They then took what they learned at the course and used it in the community.

Samson Cree Nation Administration Building

Vision Statement

Samson Cree Nation is a healthy, educated, industrious community rooted in strong culture and traditional values.

Mission Statement

Samson Cree Nation as a Sovereign Nation is dedicated to the Preservation of Our Language, Culture, Beliefs and Customs, which will meet the needs of the Nipisikopahkinawk (Peoples of Samson Cree Nation) by maximizing the Human and Natural Resources.

Setting the Stage – Personal Commitment

The community had started a long process that would require its members' commitment and perseverance. One member was Wanda Baptiste. As Manager of Natural Resources, Baptiste worked to find the strengths of the community to align them toward a common vision. Baptiste comes to this role naturally. When she was young, her mother was a Councillor and often brought her along to meetings and on outings to visit people in the community. From this, she gained perspective and a sense of responsibility for her people.

Following a Sequential Process

The community took on the following eight-step planning process:

- establish SCN's planning committee of managers and interested band members;
- identify issues and define goals;
- collect data;
- gather conceptual plans, assemble draft;
- present conceptual plans to Chief and Council;
- develop a preliminary plan;
- present final revisions to band members; and
- approve Community Development Plan.

In the mid-1990s, the community started formally documenting the community plan. The First Nation used a consultant already working in the community to finish an Environmental Issues Inventory. The draft community plan was created in 1995 for the community to discuss and comment on. Subsequent phases were developed using this discussion and other input from SCN managers and administrators. In 1997, the Community Planning Department was formed with Wanda Baptiste appointed Manager.

The Community Development Plan is now waiting final approval from Chief and Council as the official plan for the community.

Issues Arising out of the Planning Process

One of the key goals of the planning process was to deal with anticipated expansion and growth while protecting the environment, and the health and safety of community members. To date, most housing construction has taken place in the rural area. The community has the following concerns with this pattern of development:

- fragmenting of SCN land;
- impact on limited agricultural resources;
- concerns with the environment, health and safety around individual wells and septic systems;
- servicing costs;
- protection of resource extraction areas; and
- land availability.

There are also concerns with water quality, particularly that the water is hard and high in iron. As a result, bottled water is used by some of the rural residents. SCN is now in discussions about joining with neighbouring municipalities to develop a regional water system.

Councillor Patrick Buffalo jokes about the generally scattered pattern of rural development. "It looks like we have the measles." The community plan aims to promote a more orderly and functional pattern of development, without negatively affecting the character of the community. To minimize problems that come with scattered rural development, the plan aims to promote development in the core area of town.

Samson Cree Nation Secondary School

Samson Cree Nation Business Development Complex

Community Participation

The existing Townsite Committee is a sub-committee of the Community Development Committee. It aims to improve the townsite area. Community members took part in the planning process through community meetings, workshops, newsletters, questionnaires and individual meetings. When differences of vision and approach arise, which is bound to happen, matters are resolved through one-on-one discussions with the individuals involved. This approach has proven to be effective.

The Plan

In 1995, Chief and Council set up a target residential allocation of 80 percent urban and 20 percent rural. This is a reversal of the existing settlement pattern and represents a major commitment to expanding the townsite.

New rural housing will be limited to areas where there are existing services (access road, well, septic) or using cluster servicing called the Family Development Concept (FDC). The FDC includes 8 to 10 houses in a cluster with a single access road, water system and sewage system. The cluster may be in the rural area outside of the designated townsite area. The resulting townsite plan allows for alternative housing types, including duplexes, townhouses and apartments, on a pilot basis.

The planning document outlines the plan's background and purpose, existing land use and population, projects, community input and concerns, and issues that the plan will address. The plan has policies for:

- land use;
- housing;
- agriculture;
- environmental protection;
- recreational land use; and
- municipal servicing (rural and townsite).

It also suggests that policies be developed for:

- culture;
- education;
- transportation;
- membership involvement;
- economic development; and
- administration.

Townsite housing

Samson Cree Nation Community Expansion Plan, depicting the townsite area

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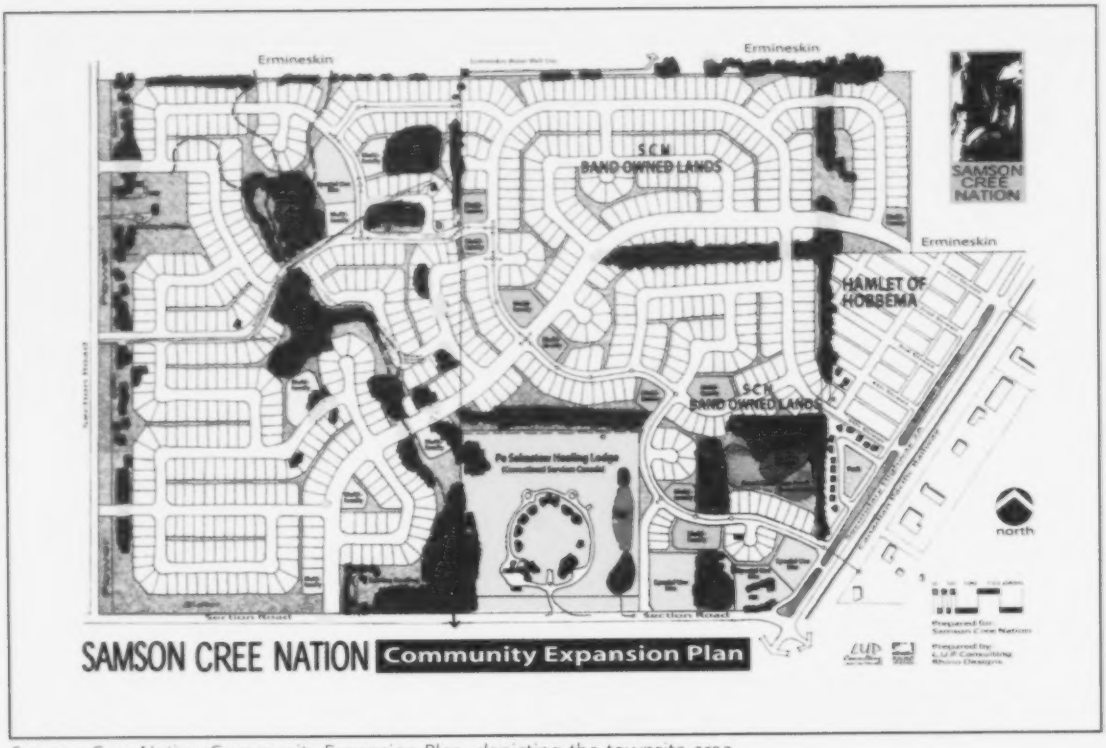

Samson Cree Nation Community Expansion Plan, depicting the townsite area

Carrying out the Plan – New Challenges

It has been challenging for the community planning staff to maintain the momentum of the vision and to get and keep the attention of political leaders. The ongoing nature of community planning makes the continuity of Council and staff an issue as well. An equally important and constant challenge is finding funding to carry out the plan.

Baptiste advises other communities that might embark on a similar community process to begin the process in-house and to "just roll up your sleeves and do it." It is a long process and persistence is necessary. For her, it "comes from the heart... after all, we have to think of our children and our grandchildren."

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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JOINT COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Collaboration of First Nation, federal and university resources and expertise
- Development of planning model—a simple, well-defined process with real results
- Community involvement
- Capacity building through shared trainee program

Atlantic First Nations Combining Planning Initiatives–Planning for Planning

For small rural First Nations, planning is just one of many important jobs that compete for limited resources and expertise. Often, human and financial resources are spread too thin for a community to take the time to consider developing a comprehensive community-based plan. The Joint Community Planning Committee (JCPC) was created to pool resources of 13 Atlantic First Nations. Six federal departments and the assistance of Dalhousie University helped with planning resources. The First Nations Community Planning Model was created as a simple, well-defined process. The model was tested in three pilot communities. The 13 communities took part in a capacity building program to help develop experience and understanding.

QUICK FACTS

Who is the JCPC?

Participant First Nation communities

The following 13 Atlantic First Nations have been actively involved in the implementation and training program:

- Abegweit, Prince Edward Island
- Bear River, Nova Scotia
- Big Cove, New Brunswick
- Conne River, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Eskasoni, Nova Scotia
- Indian Brook, Nova Scotia
- Kingsclear, New Brunswick
- Membertou, Nova Scotia
- Metepenagiag (Red Bank), New Brunswick
- Pictou Landing, Nova Scotia
- Tobique, New Brunswick
- Wagmatcook, Nova Scotia
- Woodstock, New Brunswick

Federal departments

- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Natural Resources Canada
- Health Canada
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Public Works and Government Services Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Dalhousie University

- Cities and Environment Unit
- School of Urban and Rural Planning, Faculty of Architecture and Planning

Map of communities participating in the JCPC

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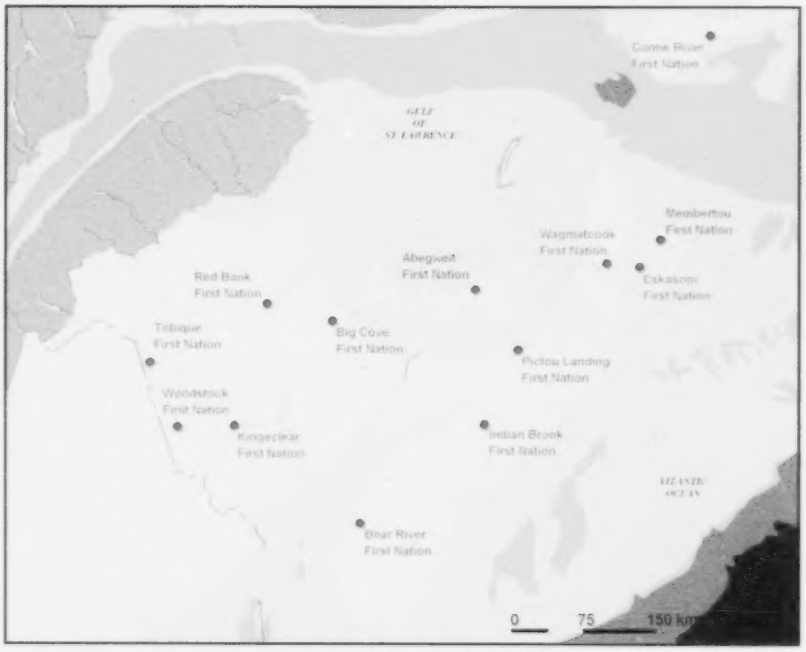


Map of communities participating in the JCPC

In 1999, the JCPC was created as a round table committee, made up of 13 Atlantic Canada First Nations, 6 federal departments and Dalhousie University. The JCPC saw the need for planning in First Nation communities and the limited resources available. It was created to let groups work together to reduce the planning barriers in First Nation communities in Atlantic Canada.

The first three phases set up the foundation for community-based planning and built the necessary tools and capacity to carry it out. Phase 1 defined and found information needed to do community planning on reserves. This phase resulted in the information matrix. This is an index of available and needed planning information specific to First Nation communities.

Phase 2 gathered and interpreted key pieces of information identified in Phase 1 for three First Nation communities. The results of Phase 2 are planning resource kits and reference books, a collection of important information and a guide to that information. Phase 3 developed the First Nations Community Planning Model, a guide for preparing local plans. Altogether, the project gives information and tools to help First Nation communities develop community-based plans that are suitable for and recognized by the community.

Developing the Model – Stages of Community Planning

The First Nations Community Planning Model is a template for developing community-based plans in First Nation communities. The model has seven steps:

Step 1:
Gathering background information – collect basic facts and perceptions about the community so that aspects which stand out as high and low points can be identified.

Step 2:
Identifying strengths and issues – concentrate on recording and understanding problems that need to be dealt with and opportunities that can be built on.

Step 3:
Researching root causes – explore strengths and issues to reveal the root causes of the consequences of no action.

Step 4:
Establishing a vision – establish a long term, ambitious and appropriate direction for the community.

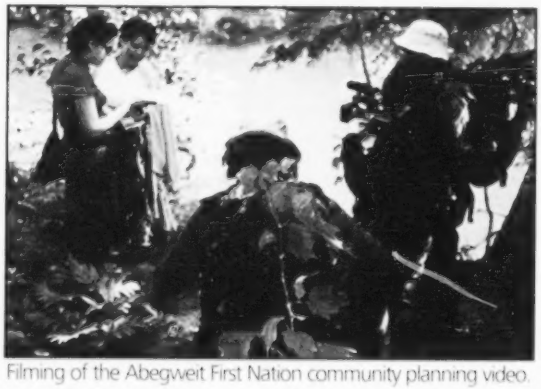
Step 5:
Building a framework – translate the vision, issues, and values into a blueprint for concerted action in terms of policies, administration, priority action areas and physical improvements.

Step 6:
Developing an implementation strategy – Develop an implementation strategy and determine priority projects. Organize the necessary resources to realize the projects.

Step 7:
Monitoring the plan and projects – evaluate the impact of projects individually, the effects of planning as a whole, and revise the plan on an ongoing basis.

These steps combine to create a community planning process. Some of the supporting tools available from the JCPC include:

- Community planning video – a 40-minute video showing the planning process in Abegweit, one of the pilot communities;



Filming of the Abegweit First Nation community planning video.

- First Nations Community Planning Workbook – an overview of the basic tools needed to develop a community plan; and
- First Nations Community Planning (FNCP) Resource Centre – the JCPC is developing a FNCP Resource Centre. The centre will offer planning advice, information and resources to First Nations involved in community planning. The centre will be staffed and run by First Nations people in the region.

On May 24, 2003, Dalhousie University's Cities and Environment Unit, along with the JCPC, was awarded the prestigious Environment Design Research Association (EDRA)/Places Award for Places by the EDRA out of Berkeley, California, and the internationally circulated journal *Places*. The winning project, First Nations *Community Planning Project: Implementation*, has the community plans for the three First Nation communities in the Atlantic Region. These are Pictou Landing First Nation in Nova Scotia, Abegweit First Nation in Prince Edward Island, and Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation (Red Bank) in New Brunswick.

This is the second time the unit and the JCPC have received an award for their work in First Nation community planning. In 2001, the First Nations Community Planning Model was awarded the Dr. L. Gertler Award for Planning Excellence Grand Prize by the Canadian Institute of Planners.

Testing the Model – Seeing the Results

During the implementation phase, the model process was tested in three First Nation communities in the region. Goals of the pilot implementation included:

- testing the model and checking its effectiveness;
- providing local examples of community planning in action;
- developing local capacity through a trainee program; and
- telling people about the benefits of planning.

Training sessions at Dalhousie University

In March 2001, the three pilot communities, Abegweit in Prince Edward Island, Pictou Landing in Nova Scotia, and Metepenagiag (Red Bank) in New Brunswick, used the First Nations Community Planning Model to develop community plans. Planning teams were set up for each of the pilot communities, consisting of:

- one planner (Cities and Environment Unit, Dalhousie University);
- one planning assistant (a trainee who was part of developing the model);
- four or five trainees, including at least two from the pilot communities; and
- community contacts.

In addition to regular field visits to the pilot communities, there were training sessions at Dalhousie University. Trainees also worked in their home communities, which allowed for effective "cross pollination." The planning teams did research and assignments to contribute to the community plans. They also held discussions with community members to get feedback on the process and vision as it developed. There were public meetings and consultations with target groups, such as school children, Elders, and single mothers.

Involving youth in the planning process: a kids' pizza night in Metepenagiag (Red Bank)

Planning work groups were created in all three of the pilot communities. These groups represented a broad cross-section of the community, served as liaisons with other community members and contributed real work to the plan. School children were seen as important members and the future leaders of the community. They became involved through special youth events and school visits. As the plan was developed, successful strategies for involving community members became clear through experience and feedback.

Community planning meeting attended by community members and the community planning working group in Abegweit First Nation

Abegweit First Nation

Judy Clark, Financial Controller for Abegweit First Nation in Prince Edward Island, feels that taking on the community planning process was good for the community:

> *"There were a lot of meetings at the start, but the community grew a lot from the process. It gave us a future – now we have a vision. Everybody had a wish list. The planning process helped to put it in perspective. Even the children participated. They had a lot of ideas."*

The community planning office in Abegweit First Nation

After the 18-month process finished, the community could use the Abegweit Community Plan to support funding applications and to try and get funds from banks. As a result of the process, the First Nation hired an Economic Development Officer. There are plans for a gas bar and a playground. Other plans include restructuring the Fisheries Management Plan and forming a union on the reserve.

Pictou Landing First Nation

Frances Nicolas, a trainee from the Pictou Landing First Nation, agreed that developing the community plan was a good thing for her community. The planning team followed the seven stages of the planning model process. Meetings were held with different interest groups in the community, including women, fishers, teachers and Elders, to discuss the strengths, issues and vision for their community. Nicolas says that one of the advantages of using the planning process outlined in the model was that "issues came out in the open that people didn't usually want to talk about."

A copy of the final community plan was delivered to every home in the community. All members are able to access information gathered during the process.

Working on the Pictou Landing First Nation physical model at Dalhousie University

Some of the projects already carried out because of the planning process include a 3.5 kilometre walking trail and an organized clean-up of the beach and swamp area. Other projects started include a new band hall and office based on a community design and restructuring of the band administration. A new health centre, gas bar, subdivision development and water tower, all projects identified in the community planning process, are scheduled to be constructed this year. The development of the Fisheries Management Plan is complete and now in the implementation phase. In a community garden, over 30-raised flower and vegetable beds have been constructed so far, many in the yards of community Elders. First Nation women carpenters and summer students were hired to work on this project. "The intention is that we can feed the community with fresh vegetables, at little cost to community members," says Susan Harris, Band Manager.

Wagmatcook First Nation

After the initial three pilot projects nearly finished, other First Nations started on the same general process. One of these communities was Wagmatcook First Nation. Daphne Googoo, trainee for Wagmatcook First Nation, tells of her experience and her community's involvement:

> *"It's been an excellent and unique experience for us. During my training with the pilot community of Abegweit First Nation I was very well accepted. Being Aboriginal, I think it was something that really boosted the success of both of our community development plans. I've grown up in a First Nation and we're very careful about who we share our information with. After working as a trainee I continued working in a planning role, assisting Wagmatcook in work with Dalhousie University to go through the same process as the JCPC pilot communities. We have now developed, adopted and published our community development plan. This is the first time the people have had a voice. There is transparency and accountability. All of the information for the plan came from the community itself, so it truly belongs to the community. It provides a clear picture of direction and guides action."*

Two of the community planning trainees, Daphne Googoo and Terry Young

Wagmatcook First Nation adopted its community plan in June 2002 and immediately started some of its individual projects. As Googoo says, "I'm confident that this will not collect dust. People are eager to implement it, so it will be done."

Wagmatcook Community Plan

Action areas:

- recreation and health
- environmental awareness and research
- housing
- waterfront
- commercial development
- connection
- school as community centre
- community services and programs

Reflecting on the Model Planning Process

The JCPC planning process and implementation project successfully met its goals of developing real local examples of First Nations community plans, increasing capacity for planning activities and increasing awareness of the benefits of planning.

Planning initiatives in local municipalities usually focus on policies and practices. However, the plans developed in the three pilot communities tended to be project-based. This approach was taken because most First Nation communities in the region are small, rural, and have limited resources and infrastructure. It was felt that traditional planning tools such as bylaws, zoning or policies based on restrictions would initially make the process more complex than it needed to be. Real action helps communities realize their vision. This is why the plans are focused on projects and activities. This project helps First Nations build confidence and capacity so they can move on to other planning methods such as bylaws and policies for small community planning.

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TSLEIL-WAUTUTH FIRST NATION

An Aboriginal Community in an Urban Setting

- Open regional involvement
- Effective partnering
- Well-developed planning models

The Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, is a Coastal Salish community of about 375 members. It occupies a 110-hectare reserve on Burrard Inlet in North Vancouver, and 2 smaller reserves at the head of the Indian Arm River. Being so near the center of a major city presents both opportunities and challenges. A traditional territory that is home to an urban population of over one million people offers an exciting range of economic development options. At the same time, this urban setting can present many barriers to carrying out age old patterns of wild food harvest and spiritual practice. For the Tsleil-Waututh, living in a rapidly developing traditional territory has meant accepting the responsibility to protect and enhance the Tsleil-Waututh cultural traditions, while actively participating in complex regional governance and development arenas.

On-reserve population	375
Reserve area	110 hectares
Townsite	Tsleil-Waututh First Nation
Region	British Columbia
Geographic zone	Code 1: located within 50 kilometres of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code B: geographic location between 45 and 50 degrees latitude

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A Need for Healing and Visibility

Oral history relates that, before to the mid-1700s a population of up to 10,000 Tsleil-Waututh occupied the land surrounding Indian Arm, Burrard Inlet and English Bay. This area is now known as British Columbia's Lower Mainland region. After contact with Europeans and American explorers the population was reduced to only a few hundred persons, the result of smallpox and other epidemics. When Indian reserves were first laid out in the region in 1869, the surviving Tsleil-Waututh were wrongly identified as part of the Squamish Nation. In 1923, this was reversed and the Tsleil-Waututh regained sole control of reserves in the core of their traditional territory.

Following this, the Tsleil-Waututh worked hard to protect community identity and culture in the face of rapid urban expansion. Community leaders in this period, including Chief Dan George and John L. George, spoke strongly of the need to maintain Aboriginal rights and title. In the early 1980s, Chief Leonard George built on this tradition and began a new era in the history of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation. He helped inspire a healing process that was founded on the idea that the Tsleil-Waututh would no longer be content to be invisible within their own territory. Rather than dwelling on the past, Chief Leonard George promoted healing, partnership building and reconciliation. This approach has become the central theme of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation's plans for environmental stewardship, sustainable economic development and governance.

Creating an "Engine" for Opportunity

Chief Leonard George saw that due to the small population of the Tsleil-Waututh community, they would need to work with others, both to bring expertise to the community and to develop strong outside partnerships. This is still the approach with many contract consultants and non-government organizations working in the community in a number of ongoing projects.

One key to success for Tsleil-Waututh was to see an economic development opportunity and to use the projects to fund new projects. In the early 1980s, the First Nation looked for partners to build a high-density on reserve housing complex.

They choose an Asian business partner that shared the interest in long-term relationship building and respect for indigenous business development values. This partnership resulted in the construction of six three-storey buildings with nearly 700 condominium units, each of which is leased for a period of 99 years. About 4 of the 110 hectares of the Tsleil-Waututh's largest urban reserve has been set aside for this form of development.

Community consultation for this plan included a vote on the designation of land and the structure of the partnership agreement. An Operations Committee, which has two representatives from the Tsleil-Waututh Economic Development Department and two from the developer partner, oversees the operation. The committee's goals include high standards for environmental protection, quality of materials, and putting profits towards social and other community programming. Ongoing accountability comes from quarterly community meetings, a community newsletter, and cooperation with other departments of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation government.

Income from the development has helped fund many useful community activities, including a golf driving range, eco-tourism and forestry companies, and construction of a new community centre and early childhood development facilities. Most recently, income from the housing development let the Tsleil-Waututh almost quadruple their land base by buying 317 hectares of fee-simple private land located in the scenic Indian River Valley.

Community-Based Governance

In 2000, Tsleil-Waututh began developing its own community constitution. There are four elected leaders or "speakers," one of which is the Chief. These speakers work closely with the directors of the four departments that make up the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation government:

- social development;
- economic development;
- treaty, lands and resources; and
- administration and public works.

These directors work together as a management board, replacing the 'band manager' structure of decision-making. There are also nine traditional local council leaders, representing and being appointed by the families of the community. Quarterly meetings are held involving the entire band membership. At each meeting, a representative from one of the four departments reports on recent issues and activities and gets feedback from community members.

Mapping of Biophysical, Cultural and "Power" Information in the Traditional Territory

In order to coordinate its many cultural and economic developments projects, the Tsleil-Waututh have begun building a "bioregional" planning process. This has included creating folios large-format digital maps which show the land held on the three reserves, and the entire 1800 square kilometres of Tsleil-Waututh traditional territory. This resulted in the creation of maps that represent the biophysical and cultural identity of a traditional territory that has been overseen by the Tsleil-Waututh "from time out of mind." Biophysical mapping includes bedrock and surficial geology, soils, climate, hydrology and ecosystems types (birds, fish, land animals). Environmental quality 'hotspots' have also been mapped to identify areas of particular ecological sensitivity and/or significance.

The biophysical maps are complemented by a comprehensive series of cultural maps that were created with input from community members. More than 90 people were interviewed to find detailed information about over 40 traditional use activities. There is also historical information produced by experts in fields including archaeology, history and regional planning. Traditional ecological knowledge from the memory of Tsleil-Waututh community members was given equal weight to data generated by technical and scientific experts from the 'western' research tradition.

One group of maps within the larger cultural series describes how "power" is held by those within Tsleil-Waututh traditional territory. This mapping included information on the history, environmental impacts and land holdings of organizations such as BC Hydro, the Vancouver Port Authority, CN Rail, CP Rail, BC Ministry of Forests and Parks and several other agencies and businesses. The Tsleil-Waututh have developed the best available overviews of the activities of government and private sector organizations that operate within their traditional territory.

Additional folios of maps have been created for 13 smaller watershed units that make up the larger traditional territory. Mapping at this 'eco-cultural' level provides information for site-specific economic development, natural resources management, environmental baseline monitoring and ecological restoration activities.

The bioregional maps are used to record, organize and communicate information to help in strategic planning and decision-making processes. Information usually buried in reports full of technical jargon is displayed in a way that lets all community members understand and act on many complex issues. Because this process has been completed 'in-house,' the Tsleil-Waututh have made it far easier to find and take advantage of opportunities within their territory. Leah George, Director of the Treaty, Lands and Resources Department, says:

> *"Putting a three- or four-inch thick document in front of community members doesn't do much good. By putting the information in map format, it's digestible. That's the method we use to ensure that everyone is kept in touch with the many activities the First Nation is involved with."*

Adopting the FNLMA and Developing a Community Plan

The Tsleil-Waututh First Nation is in the process of entering into the *First Nations Land Management Act* (FNLMA), adopting its own land management code and developing a community plan for its urban reserve lands. The community plan will address issues such as land use, zoning, bylaws, phased residential development, economic development opportunities, housing and social services. Social services are important to the Tsleil-Waututh, and they feel that one of the responsibilities of an urban First Nation community is to act as a host and source of stability for the many First Nations people that come to the urban setting. Having a supportive First Nation community nearby should be very helpful.

Creating Partnerships

One of Tsleil-Waututh's strengths has been their skills at creating mutually beneficial partnerships with different agencies within both the public and private sectors. The Tsleil-Waututh have agreements with many organizations, including:

- the District of North Vancouver;
- BC Ministry of Forests;
- BC Parks
- EcoTrust Canada;
- Simon Fraser University
- the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society; and
- International Forest Products, one of the largest logging companies in BC.

Most of these partnerships address issues such as capacity-building, environmental protection and/or business development opportunities.

Agreements with the District of North Vancouver include a servicing agreement for water, sewer, library and recreation services, and the joint planning and operation of a major municipal park and cultural village site. Leah George explains that the relationship-building process was gradual:

> *"It is sometimes difficult for First Nation communities to develop relationships with municipalities because the municipality often feels powerless relative to their provincial and federal counterparts. In our case, the process started out by the Chief having monthly breakfast meetings with the Mayor of the District of North Vancouver. Gradually, as the relationship became more solid, it also became more structured with regular meetings, a servicing agreement that was signed in 2000 and a co-management agreement for a local municipal park covering several hundred acres. These agreements were developed in a positive spirit of cooperation that required give-and-take by both parties."*

The Tsleil-Waututh have also signed a cooperative agreement with Simon Fraser University to develop an academic program for First Nation government employees. The Chief Dan George Centre for Advanced Learning was created to provide certification in fields such as early childhood education, planning, administration and social services. Eventually, credits awarded for these certificates will be transferable for degrees awarded by Simon Fraser University.

Economic Ventures

Several economic ventures are a direct result of the Tsleil-Waututh approach to bioregional planning. The First Nation used its knowledge and connection with its traditional lands and waters to create culturally and economically viable enterprises. A golf driving range was built to take advantage of high demand in the Lower Mainland. An eco-tourism venture, Takaya Tours, now in its 4th year of operation, has 15 employees, 6 ocean going canoes, and 30 kayaks. Other activities offered include drum making, story telling and guided tours.

In 2000, the Tsleil-Waututh purchased 317 hectares of wilderness lands located at the head of Indian Arm. A development plan for the area, known as the Inlailawatash Lands, includes operation of a Forest Stewardship Council certified eco-forest, a trail system, canopy walk, wild salmon interpretation centre, fishing lodge, wild-crafting centre, longhouse, and culture camp. They received help from Ecotrust Canada, a non-profit organization that helps with business development in west-coast Aboriginal communities. Ecotrust loaned money to buy the property, and has since supplied expertise and training in eco-tourism and eco-forestry planning.

The Tsleil-Waututh continues to chart new ground in their economic development ventures. For example, the recent announcement of the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver/Whistler has already led to opportunities with projects that could be large enough to benefit many future generations of Tsleil-Waututh.

The Urban Setting: Both a Challenge and Opportunity

The Tsleil-Waututh First Nation keeps adapting to its role as a visible and active participant in all aspects of governance and development that happen within its traditional territory. While this is helpful to economic development and associated capacity building, it also represents a challenge to the preservation of cultural issues, which needs careful attention and management. The Tsleil-Waututh want to be visible, active and involved in this process rather than being a spectator to change. This involvement, while often challenging, has created many positive benefits to the members of this urban First Nation, to its many partners and the environment of its long-held traditional territory.

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SHARING THE STORY

FIRST NATIONS LAND MANAGEMENT ACT COMMUNITIES

EXPERIENCES IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

FIRST NATIONS LAND MANAGEMENT ACT COMMUNITIES

Economic Development and Local Control

Many First Nations operating under the *Indian Act* have been limited in their ability to control their land. It means they have less chances to develop economic opportunities linked to the land. Government approval processes can hold up lease and business development initiatives. Often, potential business partners of First Nations cannot afford to wait through the months or years it may take to complete these processes, so they end up taking their business to non-Aboriginal partners. Now that economic development is seen as a strategy for improving conditions in their communities, these lost opportunities can be devastating.

For some First Nations, opting out of the *Indian Act* for land management has opened up opportunities to control their lands and for economic development. They can do this through the *Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management* (FAFNLM). This agreement was ratified by the *First Nations Land Management Act* (FNLMA) in 1999 and by participating First Nations as they pass land codes.

SOME OF THE ADVANTAGES FOR FIRST NATION PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:

- gaining direct authority over their lands and resources;
- improving access to economic development opportunities by shedding barriers imposed by the *Indian Act;*
- improving land management decision-making processes at the local level; and
- enacting and enforcing good environmental management and protection laws.

The FNLMA is an important building block to self-government. It allows First Nations to manage their reserve lands outside of the *Indian Act*. Given the close relationship of First Nations to the land, it makes sense for land management to be the first step toward self-government. Opting out of the *Indian Act* for land management and adopting the FNLMA can affect how a First Nation proceeds with its community planning and development.

Capacity and Confidence

Participating First Nations have found that taking control of land management has given them additional capacity, confidence and revenues that can be put toward social and economic development.

First Nation Successes

This theme area shares the experiences of three First Nations: Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Muskoday First Nation, and Ehcelh T'enuch. **Figure 5** shows the location of each community.

Figure 5

Capacity and Confidence

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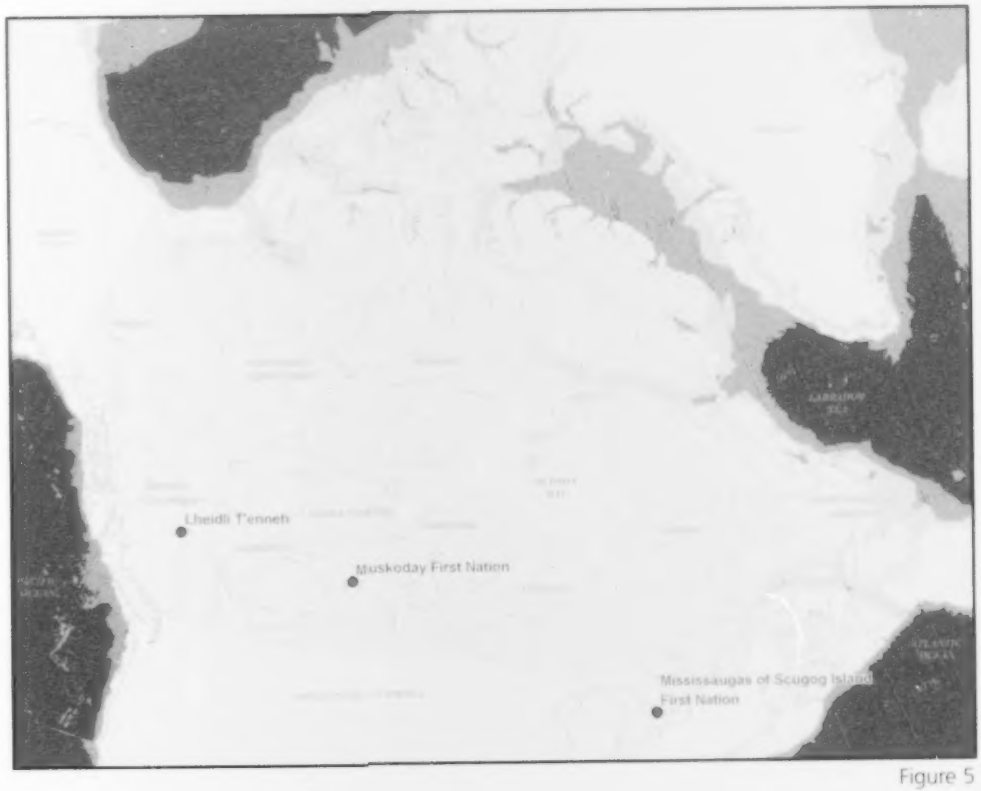

Figure 5

Key parts of the FAFNLM and FNLMA

Land Codes

A First Nation that signs into the FAFNLM exercises its land management and administration option by creating its own land code, drafting a community ratification process and entering an individual transfer agreement with Canada. The community has to approve the First Nation's land code and its proposed individual agreement with Canada. The individual agreement looks after operation funding levels and land transfer administration details from Canada to the First Nation.

First Nation Land Management Rights, Powers and Laws

Once a First Nation puts a land code into effect, it has the power to manage its land under the FNLMA. Some of the powers, rights and authorities that are allowed under the agreement are listed, in simplified form, below:

- all the rights, powers and privileges of the land owner;
- the authority to grant interests and licenses and to manage its natural resources;
- legal capacity to acquire and hold property;
- ability to manage revenues, royalties, profits and fees;
- the right to exchange a parcel of First Nation land for another parcel of land according to community approval and the land code, and acceptance by Canada to set apart the land as a reserve;
- right to take control of interests in First Nation lands;
- the power to make laws according to the land code, respecting the development, conservation, protection, management, use and possession of reserve lands, including zoning, land use, subdivision control, land development, environmental assessment and protection, provision of local services, user charges, etc.;
- the power to enforce its land code using different regulatory tools;
- continued authority under other terms of the *Indian Act* to make bylaws; and
- continued protection of reserve lands, treaty and Aboriginal rights and relationships held in trust.

Environment

Participating First Nations are allowed to make environmental laws about their lands, subject to an Environmental Management Agreement. This agreement must be negotiated between the First Nation, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Environment Canada and the province, when the province agrees to take part. An Environmental Management Agreement is a plan on how the First Nation will enact environmental protection laws, including timing, resource requirements, inspection and enforcement.

Participating First Nations must aim to develop an environmental assessment process within one year after the land code takes effect. The process must be consistent with the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

Lands Advisory Board

Participating First Nations created a Lands Advisory Board to help them carry out their own land management systems. Some of the responsibilities and activities done by the Lands Advisory Board include:

- developing model land codes, environmental assessment and protection systems, laws, documents, agreements and management systems. Model agreements are available for use between First Nations and other authorities and institutions, including public utilities and private organizations;
- establishing a resource centre with courses and training programs for managers and others who do jobs related to a land code;
- helping First Nations get the expertise to resolve specific land management issues;
- helping with funding negotiations; and
- keeping records of First Nations land codes.

MISSISSAUGAS OF SCUGOG ISLAND FIRST NATION

FNLMA – One Step Closer to Self-Government

- Cooperation among First Nations
- Efficient planning processes
- Best use of limited resources

The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation is one of the smallest First Nations in Ontario, in terms of area. It has a land base of about 240 hectares on the interior of Scugog Island. The community is about 12 kilometres northeast of Port Perry. It has only 170 members, 65 of whom live on the reserve. Vehicles can get on to the island by a causeway for Highway 7A.

One of the more important commercial establishments in the area is the Great Blue Heron Charity Casino. Located right on the reserve, the casino is owned and operated by the First Nation. Even with very limited human resources in the community, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation has taken responsibility for its land management under the *First Nations Land Management Act* (FNLMA). Many other First Nations adopting the FNLMA have used Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation's land code as a model.

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Adopting the FNLMA—Taking Advantage of Opportunity

The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation voted to adopt the FNLMA in 1998. The Chief at the time, Rennie Goose, remembers the main reason that the First Nation decided to take this path:

> *"The main driving force for us was for economic development. Getting a business going under the* Indian Act *is a long path. By the time information flows from the First Nation, through the federal government regional offices to headquarters, then back down the line, the process can easily take anywhere from 6 to 18 months. By that time, any business that may have been interested in partnering with the First Nation has likely moved on. So many First Nations have missed many economic development opportunities because they've had to get the blessing of the federal government. We decided to pursue the FNLMA because it allows the process to move in a timely manner."*

Jill Thompson, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation Land Manager

Localized and Efficient Land Management Processes

Rennie Goose also says that gaining control of their lands was also one of the main reasons why the First Nation pursued the FNLMA. "It gives us jurisdiction over our own lands. Under the *Indian Act*, even a relatively simple agricultural lease would take a long time to process. We now have control over leasing and also over environmental regulation and enforcement."

Jill Thompson, Land Manager for Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, agrees that processes are now more efficient. Under the *Indian Act*, Certificates of Possession for individual land parcels could take up to two years to process. Thompson says that while there was a learning curve for the First Nation and the federal government in certifying land parcels under the FNLMA, an efficient process has been developed. She explains:

> *"When we first started processing housing certificate allocations under the FNLMA, the process took months and repeated applications. Now the process is much quicker. It took a while for the federal government to grasp the overall big picture that under the FNLMA they have given up the control."*

Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation Land Code Excerpts—Setting the Stage

> *"The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation have a profound relationship with the land that is rooted in respect for the Spiritual value of the Earth and the gifts of the Creator and have a deep desire to preserve our relationship with the land."*

> *"The power of Scugog Island First Nation to govern and administer our lands flows from the Creator to the people of Scugog Island First Nation, and from the people to their Council."*

> *"The purpose of this Land Code is to set out the principles, guidelines and processes by which Scugog Island First Nation will exercise control over the lands and resources consistent with the Framework Agreement."*

Cooperation Among First Nations

The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation and the nearby Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation were among the first group of First Nations to enter into the FNLMA. As someone who stepped into the Lands Manager role soon after the FNLMA was adopted in her community, Thompson recognizes the value of having an experienced First Nation nearby. "It's great," she says. "They've been doing their own land management for many years now for numerous cottages and leased properties in their community. They're more experienced as land managers and as a larger community, they have more resources and training. They've been very willing to help out and share information with us along the way."

Rennie Goose found this close relationship with Georgina Island First Nation useful. "We helped each other along the way," he says. "We both voted on the same day and it was useful to be able to compare our land codes."

Improved Economic Conditions and Business Relations

Rennie Goose says that the casino development would not likely have taken place if Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation had not opted out of the *Indian Act* for land management:

> *"It definitely helped in our negotiations with our partner in operating the casino. Our lease arrangement required that we borrow a significant sum of money and it's likely that we would not have been able to do so under INAC land management. Under FNLMA, we were able to secure the loan and hold ourselves out as a stable potential partner."*

Now that the casino is operating, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation has no unemployment. The casino employs between 850 and 950 people. This benefits surrounding municipalities and other First Nations whose residents work at the casino. A percentage of the casino money has been directed to other First Nations and the neighbouring municipality, the Township of Scugog.

Thompson thinks that land management will become increasingly important in Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation:

> *"We're a fairly small community and up until now we haven't used our land too intensely. We've developed the casino and now that we have a small revenue, we want to use it well because it may be the spin-offs that make the community sustainable in the future. We're now in the process of developing the economic development organizations and land management practices that will enable us to achieve that goal."*

Great Blue Heron Charitable Casino

Continuing to Plan

In 1998, the Ogemawahj Tribal Council completed a *Strategic Land Plan for Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation* and in 2002, a *Background and Needs Report* was prepared. Studies now in the draft stage include a *Strategic Economic Development Plan* and a *Capital Planning Study* (CPS). The economic development plan considers a phased approach to developing the following:

- 23 new housing lots;
- lakeshore facilities;
- surface drainage project;
- Elder's residence;
- recreational facilities;
- arena;
- casino extension;
- casino sewage treatment improvements;
- business centre;
- store and gas bar;
- strip mall;
- bank;
- hotel/motel;
- fire hall;
- daycare; and
- police facility.

In 2000, a new health and resource centre was built in the community. It includes a library, board rooms, event hall, nurse/doctor station and Internet connections.

Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation Health and Resource Centre

Recent and ongoing planning studies include the following:

- background and needs evaluation;
- constraints mapping based on soil conditions, topography, environmental conditions and areas of protection;
- hydrogeological investigations;
- 20-year population projections;
- surveys with community members; and
- development and assessment of servicing and planning alternatives.

Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation Administration Centre

During public consultation sessions, community members said they preferred that commercial/industrial development be kept to the southern part of the reserve. They also support land use policies and bylaws, as well as buffer zones around stream channels through the reserve land. As part of the CPS, a project management consultant hired by the First Nation gave the First Nation background information about land use policies, development controls, and bylaws used by non-Aboriginal municipalities in Ontario.

Valerie LaRocca, Councillor for the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, says that much of the background work is finished and the community is preparing for the next steps. "Our priority now is to get a board up and running for the development aspects of our planning process. We're in the final stages of setting that up now."

Looking Ahead

Some of the key goals of Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation are to expand its land base, to move forward with self-government and to continue with socio-economic development.

Rennie Goose sees land base expansion as a logical follow-up goal now that the First Nation has control of its reserve land:

> *"In 1954, we had to sell a 200-acre parcel of our land in order to pay for housing. We're presently looking to re-acquire that property. We'd also like to be able to gain some waterfront property if possible. It would be ideal for economic development opportunities such as leasing, marina facilities or perhaps a trailer park."*

Jill Thompson credits the FNLMA for advancing the cause of self-government. "One of the main reasons that our First Nation chose to go the FNLMA route was because it took us one step closer to self-government. We're presently in the process of developing comprehensive self-government and the FNLMA has offered us a chance to achieve that in the area of land management."

Thompson also notes that the First Nation has started creating a socio-economic development plan:

> *"Economic development has a domino effect. It benefits our community in so many ways. We are presently creating a socio-economic development plan that will include strategies for economic development, healthy community living, cultural awareness, career opportunities, recreation facilities, physical infrastructure and human resource development. We'd like to be able to attract some of our members back to our community and to do that is needed to create incentive."*

Community Goals

- encourage youth to stay in the community and members to return
- expand land base
- preserve environmentally sensitive areas
- strengthen economic base, possibly through casino expansion and/or other commercial development
- expand recreational facilities
- address water quality concerns
- increase housing, including Elder's accommodation
- develop land use policies and bylaws to control future development
- address member's concerns about the *Indian Act*

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MUSKODAY FIRST NATION

Removing the Roof

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Trusted leadership
- Innovative economic and land development
- Skilled labour force

Muskoday First Nation is about 20 kilometres southeast of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The community has some of the best agricultural lands in western Canada. When members both on and off the reserve voted in favour of their community developing its own land code, Muskoday became the third First Nation to adopt the *First Nations Land Management Act* (FNLMA). Members credit significant social and economic improvements in their community to the adoption of the FNLMA.

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	500
Reserve area	9,700 hectares
Townsite	Muskoday First Nation
Region	Saskatchewan
Geographic zone	Code 1: located within 50 kilometres of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude.

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Photo of Muskoday First Nation community facilities. Bottom left: water treatment plant. Center left: administration building. Center right: health clinic. Background: South Saskatchewan River.

Muskoday First Nation has a population of about 1400. Five hundred members live in the community. Both the South Saskatchewan River and Highway 3 pass through the reserve. Ed Bear is a community member and has been Land Manager since 1983. He has seen many changes in the way Muskoday has looked at and carried out land management planning over the years. Leroy Bear is the Band Manager and knows the effects the FNLMA has had on social and economic development at Muskoday.

Adopting the FNLMA—Removing Lost Opportunities

Leroy Bear remembers the turning point that caused Muskoday to adopt the FNLMA:

> *"About 12 years ago, a manufacturer of farm implements wanted to set up an operation at Muskoday. The opportunity would have represented revenue and employment to our community, but at that time our only option for such proposals was to say 'Sorry, we can't talk to you. You'll have to make your proposal to INAC because they're in control of these matters.'"*

After getting caught up in "red tape," they were unable to come to an agreement. The manufacturer ended up establishing their operation in a nearby municipality. Leroy Bears says:

> *"That was the big push for Chief and Council to pursue the FNLMA. We recognize that for any development to occur there are always procedural hoops to jump through. Under FNLMA we also have development approval processes, but now the decisions are being made at the local level by people living in the community who know the local issues."*

Developing a Land Code

One of the FNLMA requirements is that participating First Nations develop a land code. Muskoday has created a land code. It is a detailed plan to guide community development and land management. Key parts of the code and associated land use plan include:

- present and future land use zones;
- zoning bylaws, allowing for enforcement of land use restrictions;
- land use policies, encouraging practices consistent with general community goals; and
- an environmental management system, including:
  - screening processes for projects;
  - environmental management responsibilities for all band staff; and
  - promotion of environmental protection within the community.

One of the land code's fundamental principles under the FNLMA is that the community votes on it. This way, Chiefs and Councils cannot change what has been adopted by the community. This allows for the plan's continuity and its implementation, which is important in any long-term community planning exercise.

Ed Bear recalls:

> *"One of the first things we did was for our Chief to consult our Elders. Together, they considered 'What does land management involve and what will it mean for our First Nation?' Trust in the Chief is essential. If the Chief does not gain the confidence of the Elders, it won't go anywhere."*

The First Nation held information sessions and sent mail-outs to each eligible voter. As Ed Bear says, "Throughout the process, all involved parties examined and re-examined what land management is, from their perspective and that of others."

Environmental Considerations

Muskoday will be creating its own environmental code. It will have two parts: an environmental screening process and environmental standards. The FNLMA requires that these parts be as strict as the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*. It is important to note that Muskoday can now create its own environmental laws, and it can enforce them, something it could not do before.

Before taking responsibility for its land, Muskoday, as with other FNLMA communities, had to undergo environmental site assessments. This was to establish an inventory of the environmental condition of land. Ed Bear says, "Upon assuming responsibility of our lands we were able to exclude any parcels of land with lingering environmental issues, only to include them once Canada had rectified the situation and given the land a clean bill of health."

Land Holdings

Ed Bear explains how land holdings have been addressed in Muskoday:

"In pre-FNLMA times, we had Traditional Land Holdings to acknowledge our members on the parcels of land that they occupy. The problem was that the Indian Act *did not allow for the land parcels to be registered in the Indian Lands Registry. Under our newly adopted land code, our Traditional Land Holdings are recognized and a certificate is given to the person holding the land. It is also registered in our lands registry. Lots of our community members were quite excited to have that piece of paper. Previously, they had been concerned that if a new Chief and Council were elected, their land holdings may be called into question. Now, with the registered certificate, that is no longer a concern."*

Economic Development Improves Social Conditions

Leroy Bear comments on how taking control of land management has advanced community economic and social goals:

"We always had a clear concept of how the areas of our community were to be set aside for residential, commercial, agricultural, recreational and cultural purposes. Now we have the ability to implement that vision. We are also better positioned to pursue economic development opportunities. A good example is the Muskoday Convenience Store and Gas Bar on the major provincial highway that passes through our community. Originally, a feasibility study conducted by one potential funding agency concluded that the store would not be economically feasible. We felt otherwise and were able to proceed, partially through the assistance of the INAC Opportunities Fund. Well, the store opened in 1994 and in a seven-year period has expanded twice and has significantly diversified the merchandise offered. Its annual revenue is now in the range of $7 million. This would never have happened if we were not under the FNLMA and had to deal with INAC on a daily basis."

Centre: Muskoday Store, Gas Bar and Café on Highway 3, surrounded by the (top left) rodeo grounds and (bottom centre) powwow grounds, Veterans Memorial Park

Leasing Opportunities

The FNLMA lets Muskoday create a welcoming setting for non-community members wishing to live in the community. This generates revenue from leases and also allows for fee-for-service opportunities associated with water, sewer and waste disposal. Leroy Bear explains:

> *"We have a portion of our community set aside for leased lots. The lots, or 'acreages,' are of a fair size and we're trying to encourage fair-sized homes, fitting of the lots, to be built. Lease terms range from 35 to 99 years. We have about 93 square kilometres of land, most of which is agricultural, so space limitations are not an issue. We have a lot of skilled labour and we build all of the houses in the community, so that provides another employment opportunity and revenue stream."*

Gaining Confidence

Ed Bear thinks that it was easy for Muskoday to set up its new land code:

> *"The difficult part is getting our community members to truly believe that we can do it. Imagine for a moment that for all your life, you lived in a house with a low roof, so low that whenever you jumped, you banged your head. When the roof is finally removed, it takes a while before you can be reconditioned to jump freely without fear of hitting the roof. That's the way it's been in our community. There was a time when our community members had to obtain permission from the* Indian Act *to sell goods or to even leave the community. That's how powerless we were and many people remember that. So, when we opted out of the* Indian Act *for land management, and 'removed the roof' so to speak, it's taken a while to get used to. Many people have come to me about various aspects of our newly acquired responsibilities and asked 'Can we really do that?' Of course, I'm happy to answer, 'Yes, we really can!' It takes some getting used to."*

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LHEIDLI T'ENNEH

Gaining Control of Land Management is First and Foremost

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Focusing available human resources
- Involvement and commitment of family groups
- Consistency of leadership and involved personnel
- Partnerships with other First Nations and neighbouring municipalities

The community of Lheidli T'enneh is on the northeast boundary of Prince George, British Columbia, just above where the Fraser and Nechako rivers join. It also has one reserve land parcel in Prince George and two others on the Nechako River. About 100 of the 308 members of the First Nation live on-reserve. Although the community is fairly small in terms of band membership and land base, its members have successfully focused on effective community planning. The community land code, developed as part of the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management (FAFNLM), provides the basis of the Lheidli T'enneh land use planning approach. The ongoing success of the planning process is thanks to the involvement of many community members. All family groups have contributed.

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	100
Reserve area	685 hectares
Townsite	Lheidli T'enneh
Region	British Columbia
Geographic zone	Code 1: located within 50 kilometres of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude

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Two Lheidli T'enneh members standing in front of Ice Mountain, 113 kilometres northeast of Prince George. Ice Mountain and the surrounding area are special for the Lheidli T'enneh community because of their cultural significance.

Adopting the FAFNLM

Lheidli T'enneh was one of the original 14 First Nations to enter into the FAFNLM. It signed on in 1996. About the same time, Barry Seymour was elected as Chief. He is in his fifth consecutive term as Chief and has provided leadership while the FAFNLM is carried out. Chief Seymour comments on the community's decision to enter into the FAFNLM:

> *"The first and foremost reason for us to enter into the FAFNLM was to obtain control of the management of our lands. Economic development was one of the major spin-off benefits. Prior to FAFNLM, when an economic development opportunity came up, there was a very long, frustrating process to go through with INAC which was not conducive to business development. Our priority was to gain control."*

Seymour remembers that one of the main stumbling blocks holding back the implementation of the FAFNLM was the process for developing new laws relating to land:

> *"Initially there was a significant trust issue in the community which resulted in very stringent requirements for adopting new laws relating to land. Any new law required a vote in which at least 25 percent of the eligible voters participated and that 50 percent plus 1 voter of those voted in favour. It soon became evident to all involved, including some of those that originally proposed the requirement, that this was not practical. It took us a while to go through the process of refining the code by referendum and that likely set us back by about one year."*

In addition to improved control over land and economic development, Seymour says there were significant benefits in terms of capacity development. These benefits came before and after the community signed onto the FAFNLM:

> *"The process of actually developing the framework agreement was a great learning process for us. It took about 13 or 14 years and thank goodness the Chiefs of all of the involved communities stuck together. It felt good for the camaraderie of First Nations across the country working towards a common goal. Another spin-off was the development of geographical information systems (GIS) and using that as a tool for planning and land management. We developed a list of GIS needs that a community would require for land management and planning and an approach for obtaining the relevant information. Many First Nations across the country are behind other organizations in terms of information technology, so it's always been a priority for us to develop capacity in that area."*

In Lheidli T'enneh, two groups are responsible for planning. The FAFNLM Lands Authority looks after on-reserve land planning matters. The Land Identification Committee (LIC) looks after off-reserve lands that are proposed as treaty settlement lands. The Lands Authority has six elected positions plus an appointed person, who is presently the Chief of the community. The authority also has two resource people, Land Manager Regina Toth and Lands Technician Rick Krehbiel. The LIC is a sub-committee of the Community Treaty Council. This council is made up of family representatives who meet weekly to deal with treaty issues.

Involving Community Members from the Beginning

When Chief Barry Seymour was first elected, he recognized the need to develop a structured planning process through community involvement. Toth explains that true community representation has been one of the main factors in the community's success:

> *"Because we're such a small community, it is possible for all major family groups to be represented. Back when we started, it was a natural time for band members to be involved with the various issues confronting the community. A general meeting was held and we identified the activities required to address some of our key social, economic and environmental issues. Once the activities were identified, we asked that names be provided, along with alternates, for each task group. Since that time, virtually the same people have been very actively involved. It's been quite a load at times, with people often attending four or five evening meetings a week, but it's been worth the effort."*

The families address many issues. These include land code and treaty issues, youth, education, housing, economic development, cultural development and social issues such as the healing process for residential school trauma. The families deal with the issues at a broad level and pass on more specific details to smaller technical sub-committees or program departments. Having direct involvement from band members is essential in creating a well-balanced and healthy community.

The community Treaty Council is made up of 16 family group representatives. These representatives are responsible for addressing various community issues such as land codes and treaty issues.

Toth also emphasizes the importance of selecting a comfortable and suitable style of community involvement:

> *"We're a small enough community that we know the style of people and the way they choose to deal with issues. We tend to keep things to a verbal format and try to schedule meetings for people's convenience. Much of our support and leadership for community involvement comes from our women and Elders. Many of these women organized recreational and social events for their children as they were growing up. Once the children were grown and independent, the women continued to co-ordinate and motivate community events, calling up many members to be involved. In this way, 'getting together' has become very natural for our people."*

Developing a Planning Vision and Model

Lheidli T'enneh is now developing a community plan. One of the first steps was to create a vision statement outlining guiding principles. With the vision statement finished, the next step was to make a planning model.

To do this, Lheidli T'enneh is using the FAFNLM to govern land management initiatives. Since the FAFNLM lets First Nations manage their lands, the community land code is an important and useful planning tool. The code is the basis of the Lheidli T'enneh land use planning approach.

Lheidli T'enneh Vision Statement

We are the Lheidli T'enneh—the people from where the two rivers converge.

Like the rivers, we aspire to move ahead as an organized, highly motivated, determined and self-reliant Nation.

We are proud, united people whose purpose is to establish a future that will ensure a high quality of life, while flourishing with our environment.

Our tradition and cultural beliefs are the driving force of our success and destiny.

Strategic Goals

- We will establish opportunities to achieve education, skills and employment.
- We will promote trust and communicate effectively.
- We will establish responsible stewardship of our resources for equitable and sustainable use.
- We will ensure accountability and effective financial management.
- We will develop a strong and viable economy.
- We will establish an effective, accountable and continuous infrastructure.

The community is assessing items such as:

- other plans from the past;
- existing physical conditions;
- land uses (residential, commercial, institutional, heritage areas, etc.); and
- appraisal of some parts of the community.

The goal is for the community plan to include a 100-year, 5-generation plan. It will include items such as land use zoning and bylaws. While the plan is being developed mainly by internal staff, outside experts are used in some cases for some help and for general advice.

The community of Lheidli T'enneh is separated by the Fraser River. The two communities are known as North Shelley and South Shelley. This picture is of the North Shelley community and has 20 houses and a triplex that holds 3 families. South Shelley has 14 houses and is also where the band and treaty office are located.

"Creating a community plan is best accomplished in a measured fashion." In the case of Lheidli T'enneh, Toth says, "The community plan is expected to take about a year to develop and will be useful for decision making and for achieving what the community really wants. We're being careful about how we set it up though, so that we can create a smooth living document. After all, we don't want to make mistakes and have to back track."

Chief Seymour notes the importance of a community-driven process:

> *"In my mind there are two very distinct phases. The first is to have a community-driven process that builds a land use plan that maps out the cultural and social needs and desires as expressed by community members. The second step is to develop the physical development plan that determines how the supporting infrastructure is to be put in place. In some cases in many communities the second step has been undertaken before or without the first. It doesn't make any sense to do the engineering before you do the planning. I guess you could say that in many cases an important step was missing. We want to be sure that that doesn't happen in our community."*

Forming Partnerships

Lheidli T'enneh is actively forming partnerships to strengthen and diversify its planning process. Since 1995, the band has had a working relationship with an Aboriginal community in the Nanai region of eastern Russia. This arrangement first started so that the two communities could develop forestry models. The success of that project led to an ongoing relationship involving the development of various social and economic protocols.

In a similar goodwill move, the band signed protocols in July 2002 with the City of Prince George and the Regional District of Fraser Fort George. These protocols were signed by the Chief and the Mayor, who is also the chair of the Regional District. The intention was to share information, promote understanding, build relationships and to advance economic and resource development, cooperative land use planning and service delivery, and effective dispute resolution. The protocol was a first in British Columbia. The three parties shared a Fraser Basin Council sustainability award for their efforts in 2004.

Lheidli T'enneh First Nation celebrates the signing of the protocol with the Regional District of Fraser Fort George and the City of Prince George. Left to right: RCMP officer, Prince George Mayor Colin Kinsley, retired Director of Regional District of Fraser Fort George Ann Hogan, Chief Barry Seymour of Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, Councillor Vanessa West of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, and City Manager George Paul.

In the area of economic development, the band has several working partnerships in the forestry and natural resources sector. This includes links to other First Nations in Canada through the national Model Forests Program.

Of equal importance are the partnerships the Lheidli T'enneh has with other First Nations. Protocols for information sharing, support and joint work efforts have been established with the Nisga'a, Snuneymuxw, Saik'uz, and Nazko First Nations in British Columbia. The Saik'uz and Nazko First Nations communities share common territory with Lheidli T'enneh.

The FAFNLM in Other First Nations

Lheidli T'enneh is an example of a First Nation that has successfully adopted the FAFNLM. Rick Krehbiel suggests that other First Nations who are not carrying out the FAFNLM now can achieve similar success, but it should not be taken lightly. "The FAFNLM is a tool worth looking at. It is not for everyone but can be a powerful tool. It requires a significant commitment and is time consuming. If a community decides that the FAFNLM aligns with community goals, it can provide a powerful organizational tool."

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SHARING THE STORY

SELF-GOVERNMENT COMMUNITIES

EXPERIENCES IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

SELF-GOVERNMENT COMMUNITIES

Community Planning Within a Broad Context

For many First Nations, the community planning process is the hub of many other community functions. Yet for communities involved in self-government, the community planning process is influenced by the broader theme of self-determination. For these communities, the process can be challenging and can test limited human resources and community capacities. At the same time, however, it can be a source of motivation, structure and the foundation for rewarding results.

For each of the three communities profiled, their ongoing pursuit of self-determination takes place in two ways—one internally within their respective communities and the other externally involving other First Nations, governments and private entities. Both ways need these First Nations to develop capacities addressing the complex policy and logistical issues associated with community government.

Self-Government Begins with the Self

To start community planning and still keep the principles of self-government in mind, each of the pilot First Nations reflected on values and identity. They did this to know where they wanted to go and how they wanted to get there. The First Nation communities in this theme area are the Teslin Tlingit First Nation in Yukon, Cree Nation of Mistissini in Quebec, and the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation in Manitoba. **Figure 6** shows the location of each community.

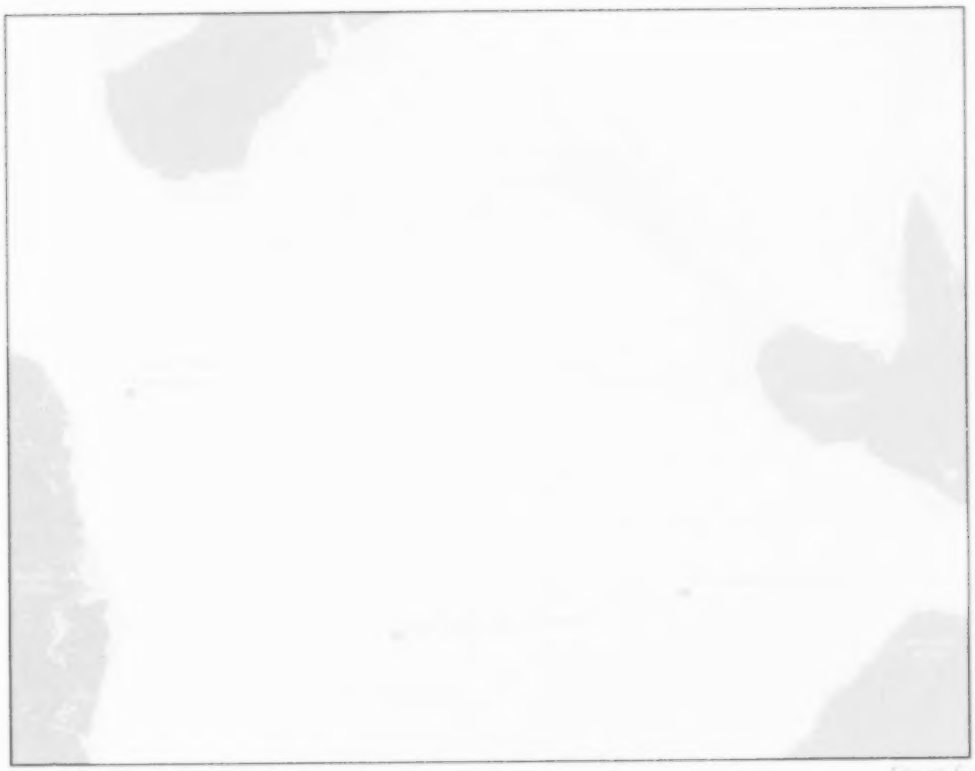

Figure 6

Self-Government Begins with the Self

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Figure 6

For the Teslin Tlingit First Nation in the Yukon, their goal is to "Tlingitize" all parts of their government to truly reflect and represent the Tlingit way. In Teslin, the community self-reflection process has included extensive community consultations through various forums. All of the communities profiled see community consultation as one of the essential ingredients to successful self-government and community planning.

The Cree Nation of Mistissini is one of nine communities belonging to the Cree Nation of Quebec, or the Eeyou Nation Government. These communities, both collectively and at the local level, channel the values that come from self-reflection into their style of government and community planning. As Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash puts it:

> *"Eeyou 'self-governance' goes much beyond simply running a government, implementing a treaty, or administering and managing our institutions and our community programs and services. 'Self-government,' our Elders tell us, begins with the 'self' (the individual), and it extends to the family, to the community and, finally, to the nation. True Eeyou self-government therefore can only take place if we as individuals strive to find our gifts and purpose in life and learn to use our gifts for the betterment of our family, our community and our nation."*

Community Planning – a Piece of the Self-Government Puzzle

Many First Nations find themselves "stretched thin" when it comes to having enough people and resources to deal with all parts of self-government. They also find it difficult at times to get to the community planning activities that they know need to be done. In some cases this may be developing a master community plan; in others it may be updating an existing plan.

When community planning comes to the forefront, it is generally addressed in a structured and comprehensive way, consistent with the self-government process itself. The community plan typically meshes with other self-government initiatives such as needs assessments, administrative reviews, environmental audits and the development of land codes. The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation intends to use of the *First Nations Land Management Act* as an important stepping stone to address some of these community planning issues within a self-government framework.

Multi-Jurisdictional Impacts

Many First Nations do planning both at the local level in their communities and at a broader level in their traditional territories. For self-government communities, there are often several different classifications of lands that differentiate the First Nation's access to and control over their territories. The traditional territories often involve some form of land and resource sharing arrangement.

Self-Determination is the Number One Priority

The profiled communities agree that it will take time and hard work, but self-determination is worth the fight. They are increasing their ability to effectively plan the future of their communities, thanks to the issues addressed and capacities developed along the way.

TESLIN TLINGIT FIRST NATION

Including the Tlingit Way

- Culturally-based governance, based on clan system
- Perseverance for rights and breaking new ground
- Strong multi-jurisdictional management

Teslin Tlingit First Nation is part of the Village of Teslin in the Yukon. Teslin is a municipality shared by both Tlingit and non-First Nation people. The First Nation is governed by its clan-based Chief and Council, with each of the five community clans represented. The village is governed by its mayor and council. In 1995, Teslin Tlingit was one of four Yukon First Nations to sign an individual agreement to carry out self government. An internal Lands and Resources Department is responsible for planning and development applications within the community. As well, a Regional Land Use Planning Commission gives direction about land issues in the broader Teslin settlement area. The Teslin Tlingit Council's initiatives are guided by a 25-year strategic plan and reflect the goal to include the Tlingit way into all systems of government.

On-reserve population	230
Reserve area	162 hectares
Townsite	Teslin Tlingit First Nation
Region	Yukon
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code E: geographic location between 60 and 65 degrees latitude

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Teslin is at "mile 804" of the Alaska Highway, about 180 kilometres south of Whitehorse. It is at the headwaters of the Yukon River at the upstream end of the world's longest salmon spawning run, in a rich and diverse natural environment. The community is surrounded on three sides by water—by Teslin Lake, one of the largest in the Yukon, and the Nisultin River, a significant waterfowl sanctuary and migratory grounds. Beyond the water are the mountains, including the one the Elders call "the fortress."

The Nisutlin Delta is one of the largest migratory bird sanctuaries in Canada. The Nisutlin River, which runs through the delta, is one of the main waterways of the Teslin Tlingit.

Of the 650 Teslin Tlingit First Nation members, about 250 live in Teslin and most of the rest live in Whitehorse. Centuries ago the Tlingit people were based in the area of Juneau, South East Alaska, and were traders, mainly with Russians and other First Nations. One of the main inland routes followed the Taku River and brought the Tlingit people to what is now the Teslin area. There are two nearby First Nations of Tlingit people, each located about 100 kilometres from Teslin.

Signing onto Self-Government

In 1973, a group of Yukon First Nations Chiefs collectively presented a paper to the federal government called "Together Today for our Children Tomorrow." This document stated their desire to regain control of their destiny. In 1993, Teslin Tlingit was 1 of 11 Yukon First Nations to sign an Umbrella Final Agreement with Canada. In 1995, it was 1 of 4 Yukon First Nations to sign individual implementation agreements. Four more signed on by 2001. Of the 14 First Nations in the Yukon, 11 have currently signed the Umbrella Agreement and 8 have signed individual implementation agreements. The Teslin Tlingit Council Self-government Agreement was developed through negotiations between the Teslin Tlingit Council, the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon.

The administrative structure of the Teslin Tlingit Council includes the following departments:

- Heritage and Culture;
- Capital and Infrastructure;
- Lands and Resources;
- Health and Social;
- Education;
- Finance and Administration;
- Justice;
- Elder's Council; and
- Executive Council.

Strategic Planning

Teslin Tlingit has developed a 25-year strategic plan around which all planning and initiatives are focused. The mission statement reflects the overall goal to "Tlingitize," to include the Tlingit way into all systems of government. The community has developed goals that give life to the mission statement. Goals are broken down further into objectives and three- to five-year specific strategies at the department level.

Mission Statement – Teslin Tlingit Council

The Teslin Tlingit Council is mandated to co-operatively continue to preserve and develop the social, political and cultural well-being of Teslin Tlingit First Nation, to maintain pride and independence based on trust and respect, and to work to conserve the wildlife, habitat and traditional territory for the well-being of the future generations.

The strategic plan was developed with community input including all-clans meetings and open-door sessions. An Elders' Council also had significant input into the plan's development.

Teslin Tlingit Goals

- To incorporate the Tlingit way into all operations of the Teslin Tlingit Council
- To maximize Tlingit control and jurisdiction over the Traditional Territory and the programs and services to Tlingit citizens
- To achieve economic self-sufficiency by creating a viable economic base
- To provide good common sense government for and by the Teslin Tlingit

Overlapping Jurisdictions

In going after self-government, Teslin Tlingit has found it challenging to conduct planning at many levels, because of its role with various jurisdictions. The First Nation shares the Village of Teslin, which has a municipal government. Teslin also has its own Chief and Council, with each of the five community clans represented. The Yukon/British Columbia border runs through Tlingit traditional territory, so it has two provincial/territorial governments to deal with. Its traditional territory also overlaps with the traditional territories of others in the area. Since the Tlingit people originally came from the area of Juneau, South East Alaska, they have inherent rights in both the USA and Canada.

Teslin Tlingit Councillor Peter Johnston describes the impact of the multi-jurisdictional setting:

"People have to understand that we never had boundaries and that they have been imposed by others. We shared with other First Nation communities based on mutual respect for shared land uses. That's the way it will have to continue and that's what we're working towards once again with other First Nations and other governments. In some cases we have trans-boundary agreements, but things can get complicated. Other governments are often pressuring us to make quick decisions, but we refuse to do so before appropriate planning is done. We're a small community, so we have limited resources. We have been able to deal with the various jurisdictions, but it is very consuming of our time, energy and resources. Sometimes we'd rather be directing more of our efforts to our programs, our people and our land, but we realize that right now this is what has to be done. Self-determination is very important to us and we're here to face the challenge."

Joint Planning

The Teslin Tlingit Council Self-Government Agreement looks after matters like land use compatibility, local service agreements, regional or district structures, community lands and Council-retained reserves. Since settlement and non-settlement lands are intermixed within the Village of Teslin, it is important that both co-exist without negatively affecting each another. The agreement considers the possibility of a joint planning structure involving territorial, municipal and Teslin Tlingit Council community land use plans.

The Teslin Tlingit First Nation and Village of Teslin councils developed a strong cooperative relationship and meet once a month. Although there are plans to update the Teslin Tlingit plan in consultation with the village, Johnston notes that the Teslin Tlingit Council is doing everything at the same time.

At the moment, the Council is concentrating on developing a Tlingit Charter of Rights, the Teslin Tlingit Council Justice Agreement and the Teslin Tlingit Healing Strategy.

In addition to joint planning efforts for the Council and the village, the self-government agreement also puts into effect the formation of a Regional Land Use Planning Commission (TRPC). The commission is responsible for reviewing land use issues in the Teslin settlement area. It is made up of representatives appointed by the federal government, the territory, the Council and the neighbouring Tlingit communities of Carcross and Tagish. This area of about 2580 square kilometres is not contained within one common border and has pockets of Crown land within its boundaries. The mandate of the commission is to "promote sustainability, protect cultural and natural resources and to facilitate economic opportunities for residents of the region, the communities and the Yukon while having regard to the interest of other Canadians."

Teslin on a beautiful winter afternoon

Mission Statement
– Teslin Regional Land Use Commission

The TRPC will develop a regional land use plan with emphasis on environmental, social and economic sustainability, full public involvement and comply with the Teslin Tlingit Council Final Land Claim and Self-Government Agreements.

Land use Planning

In the 1900s the Teslin area served as a summer gathering place. Over time the Teslin area became the permanent settlement place for the Tlingit people. In the early 1950's, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs took the responsibility for First Nation development in the communities. Johnston says, "Houses were plopped all over the place. There was not a lot of control at the time. We have to deal with it now."

Today, the Lands and Resources Department is responsible for land use planning issues within the Teslin Tlingit Council. Johnston says that the formal community plan was prepared years ago and needs updating. He notes, "The Teslin Tlingit Council is constantly in reorganization mode as a government that is growing. There is a need to wait until the time is available to give it due diligence."

Geographical information systems (GIS) mapping includes day-to-day planning. GIS mapping identifies land set aside for logging, for environmental protection and for residential housing. As part of the self-government agreement, different land categories, referred to as blocks, were designated with different rights attached. One of the roles of the Lands and Resources Department is to review applications for land development and send them on with recommendations to the Executive Council for the Teslin Tlingit Council.

Satellite photo of Teslin Tlingit First Nation

Heritage at the Core of Planning

Teslin Tlingit First Nation has drawn upon its cultural heritage in planning its social and economic development goals. Johnston states, "We have to understand who we are before we can move forward to shape who we will become." He gives the examples of the forest industry and also the recent development of a cultural heritage centre:

> *"We were one of the first First Nations in Canada to develop a forestry management program for the sustainable management of our forest areas. Our approach is to conduct selective logging with minimal damage to the forests… A more recent example is the development of our heritage centre, which is a learning centre that will help to repatriate our culture. The centre is built in the style of our traditional brush houses and contains historical information, artifacts and some of our local crafts. It's a good place for our youth to come to hear of the stories and legends of our people. We also feel that there's a potential tourist draw to the centre that we haven't yet capitalized on."*

Teslin Tlingit First Nation Heritage Centre

Managing with Limited Resources

"We can develop all the programs we want, but it takes people to push them and we're lacking in capacity and resources." Councillor Johnston explains that the administrative requirements of self-government is very demanding:

> *"We're highly accountable and have a very comprehensive reporting system. We run a zero-deficit government, but we're always tweaking things to find ways to save money but to also deliver programs to our people. We're making a great effort to involve our people in decisions about how we spend our discretionary budget because we want to make the most of what we have. It's frustrating though because about half of our budget is proposal-based, so we end up spending a disproportionate amount of time pursuing funding for the work and then reporting, rather than on the work itself.*
>
> *Are we better for having moved to self-government? I'd say yes. Everything comes down to self-determination and the right to control our destiny. Under the* Indian Act, *everything was given within bounds of a minimal standard and nothing outside of that. With self-government now a reality, we can begin to shape the things to come for our future generations."*

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CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI

A Community Focused on Success

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Highly focused community members, organized in the initiatives they go after
- Energy, pride and a strong sense of ownership and responsibility
- Well-developed community organizational structure
- Organizational stability, capability and consistency, gained through membership in the Cree Nation of Quebec

The Cree Nation of Mistissini is a community of about 3000 members, 850 kilometres north of Montreal. Mistissini is one of nine communities belonging to the Cree Nation of Quebec, and has signed on to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. The Cree Regional Authority and the Grand Council of the Crees provide a regional governmental framework that works well with Mistissini's local administrative organization. The community planning process in Mistissini started at a basic level, driven by a basic need for housing. Today, the community has a planning process that looks after physical, social, economic and cultural development. Now Mistissini is a thriving community with pride and ownership shown in its character, architecture and many community enterprises. The people of Mistissini have fought to create opportunity for themselves. More importantly, they are determined to take advantage of opportunity once it comes their way.

QUICK FACTS

On-reserve population	3,048
Reserve area	273,763 hectares
Townsite	Cree Nation of Mistissini
Region	Quebec
Geographic zone	Code 2: First Nation is located between 50 and 350 kilometres from the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access.
Climate zone	Code C: geographic location between 50 and 55 degrees latitude.

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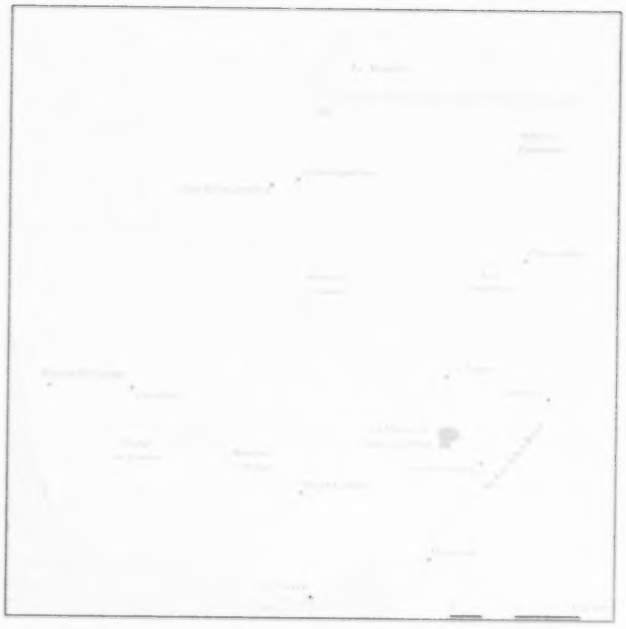


Mistissini is at the southeast end of Mistassini Lake, the largest naturally occurring freshwater lake in Quebec. Access to the community is by Highway 167, an all-season gravel road from Chibougamau, which is 86 kilometres to the southeast. The word "Mistissini" is Cree for "big rock."

Historical Presence

The Crees of Mistissini have lived in the territory of Mistassini Lake since time immemorial. Some estimates place their existence in the area as far back as 4500 to 6000 years ago. In more recent history, the Hudson's Bay Company set up a trading post at or near the present community site in the early 1800s. The Hudson's Bay Company was present in the community until the 1990s. That's when the Cree Nation of Mistissini started a co-op supply store to take the Bay's place in providing supplies, hardware, clothing and dry goods. Hunting, fishing and trapping remain an important part of the culture of the community.

Regional Planning – James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

Mistissini is one of nine communities belonging to the Cree Nation of Quebec. The surface area of Mistissini and associated rights were set up as part of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). This agreement was the result of negotiations brought about by the LaGrande Power Project in the early 1970s. In 1975, the JBNQA was signed by the federal government, the Quebec government and each community of the James Bay Cree of Quebec.

The JBNQA has many parts affecting planning for the nine communities involved. For example, issues such as housing, infrastructure, environmental protection, and social and economic development are addressed in the agreement. Regional governance and planning are coordinated by two main bodies that represent the James Bay Cree of Quebec. The Cree Regional Authority is the administrative arm and the Grand Council of the Crees can be described as a "political watchdog."

Under the JBNQA, the Cree Nation of Mistissini has jurisdictional control over the following three categories of land:

Category I lands

The Cree Nation of Mistissini has exclusive use of about 1900 square kilometres of territories with powers similar to those of a municipality.

Category II lands

The Cree Nation of Mistissini has exclusive fishing, hunting and trapping rights over an area of 17,860 square kilometres. It also has specific rights for forest and business development.

Category III lands

The James Bay Cree of Quebec have exclusive trapping rights to about 350,000 square kilometres.

Category I lands fall under the jurisdiction of local Mistissini government. Category II and III lands are available for development by others in consultation with Mistissini and the other James Bay Cree communities.

Once a year a Regional General Assembly is held, with the location of the assembly rotating among the nine member communities. The purpose of the assembly is for the Cree Regional Authority, the Grand Council of the Crees and the represented communities to report on and coordinate activities.

Local Governance

The Council of the Cree Nation of Mistissini administers local governance. The Council is made up of the Chief, Deputy Chief and seven Councillors. Elections are held every four years. The local organizational structure, policies and programs are designed to be consistent and compatible with the regional level government.

Over the years, the local Mistissini government has become more diverse, complex and capable as the community itself has grown and evolved. In the early 1970s, the governmental organization was basic and operated from a one-room band office. Now, there are six departments with different divisions and support services. The organizational structure is now under review.

Cree Nation of Mistissini Administrative building

However, the following are the existing departments, divisions and services:

- Legislative;
- Public Works;
- Community Development;
- Housing (Miichuwaap);
- Office Management and Personnel; and
- Finance.

Similar to the Regional General Assembly, an assembly is also held once a year at the local level in Mistissini. It is at this assembly that Chief and Council receive their mandate from the people. Directors of each department report on progress and plans for their departmental operations and budgets. The community has a chance to give direction and consent for future projects.

Progression of Community Growth

In the 1950s, the community occupied only a small part of what it covers today. Most of the settlement was on two small points of land, Bay Point and MacCleod Point, traditional summer gathering points for trapping families.

George Blacksmith, Director of Community Development, explains the general pattern of growth that took place:

> *"In the 1960s and early 1970s, there was a small group of tent frame and log style houses at the two points. Around that time there were two major developments that affected our ability to grow as a community. The first was the creation of an all-season road. Prior to that, we were limited to air access so most of the construction materials came directly from the land. Once the road was constructed, we could import building and other materials. The second major factor was our signing the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. Once that agreement was signed, we were able to negotiate for housing."*

George Blacksmith, Cree Nation of Mistissini Director of Community Development

George Blacksmith, in Cree Nation of Mistissini Council Chambers

"The process of community development was very gradual for us," says Blacksmith:

> *"It really all started with our fight for decent housing. As our population increased, so too did our housing requirements. While we've come a long way on that front, we still have a backlog of housing requirements. The community has always grown in a step-by-step way, according to its most pressing needs."*

Community Planning

As Mistissini grows, there is increasing need for community planning. This has been driven by both the need to resolve land use disputes and to make sure that the community develops according to the vision of its members.

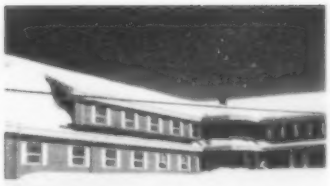
To address these needs, a master plan was developed with help from a contracted urban planning consultant. The master plan uses the community's physical, social, economic and cultural development. It is usually updated every five years to reflect the growth in the community.

One part of the master plan—the physical development plan—lays out the existing areas of development along with the proposed layout. The community has a central commercial/institutional core and is also setting land aside for industrial uses. The industrial area is likely to include the public works yard, a cement mixing operation, a heavy equipment yard and similar operations. Cultural areas include an Elder's park and a cultural retreat.

When it was finished, the plan was posted for a 30-day review. Since the review period, some concerns have been raised. Community members are worried that community growth is being forced further away from the water due to space limitations. The people have a strong connection to the water. Members feel that lots are too small and that there is not enough green space in the community. People have also asked that houses not be built back-to-back. This is to keep privacy and keep sight lines to the water whenever possible. These issues will be looked at when the plan is updated in the future.

On a broader scale, the Cree Trappers Association does most of the planning for Mistissini's traditional territories. This group is associated with the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinated Committee of the James Bay Crees of Quebec. The association has to coordinate and manage trap lines and advocate for trapper employment. Protecting the cultural ways of the Cree people in their traditional territory can be challenging, especially because of the ongoing threat of forestry and mining activities.

Cree Trappers Association Building



Rehabilitation Centre

Post Office

Schools (primary, elementary, secondary)

Memorial Arena

Community Facilities

- administration building
- fire hall
- police station
- youth centre
- health clinic
- arena
- schools (primary, elementary, secondary)
- rehabilitation centre (servicing the James Bay Cree of Quebec)
- post office
- radio station
- two child-care centres

Active Commercial Areas

- forestry, logging
- art and artisan products
- trapping
- mining
- tourism (eco-tourism, outfitting, lodging, etc.)
- boat, road and air transportation
- co-op supply store
- convenience and grocery stores
- sports and hunting store
- video rentals
- hotel and restaurants
- taxi services
- gas station
- heavy equipment and general construction
- credit union

Hotel

Grocery Store and Bank

Cree Sports and Outdoors

Land Management

Mistissini set up a bylaw to define the authority of the Land Management Committee and its advisory function to Chief and Council. In general, the committee develops zoning bylaws in consultation with members. It also reviews applications for all lot requests and makes recommendations consistent with the Community Master Plan and Zoning Bylaw.

The Land Management Committee is made up of:

- a local Land Registrar;
- a local Environment Administrator;
- Director of Public Works;
- Director of Mjichuwaap (housing); and
- an Economic Development Coordinator.

The Land Management Committee meets once a month for planning purposes.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Department has a process for community members who want to go after local business development. They must submit a business plan—a complete and well-structured outline of the proposed business. An economic development agent is assigned to each file and helps the proponents develop their plan. This typically means finding funding and financing sources. This may involve federal or provincial sources and/or financing from the local bank.

Local Bank

Self-Government

Blacksmith stresses that going after self-government is a long process. "Right now we're in the middle of the process." He notes that taking on self-governance is challenging both for building capacities to manage affairs within the community and also for external interactions. The need for external relationships has affected the style and skill set of community leaders. Blacksmith explains:

> *"There are three styles of leadership: charismatic, traditional and legal/rational. Most leaders have varying degrees of these three elements. In our culture, leaders have historically demonstrated strong charismatic and traditional leadership qualities because they tend to be fostered at the community level. But as we move towards self-government and proceed through the process of negotiating and developing our own governmental structures, there is more need to address the legal and rational aspects of government. This has become particularly important as we've become increasingly involved with dealings outside of our community. One benefit is that we can take those newly developed skills and exercise them within our community."*

Blacksmith also notes that the entire community organization is evolving. He explains:

> *"In my view, we are presently an effective organization moving towards becoming an efficient organization. Effective organizations are effective at fulfilling their function, but often rely heavily on outside resources, which can be costly. Efficient organizations have highly qualified personnel and decision-makers that are capable of being responsible for all core community government functions. The more capacity you can build to address the core functions, the more efficient you can be. That is our goal. We've gained local expertise in law, education, engineering, business and various other technical and skilled disciplines. We're well on our way to becoming a truly efficient organization."*

Mistissini has made great strides in its journey to self-government. Both the local school board and the police department are independent from the Province of Quebec. Many sections of the school curriculum are similar to those of the province, but others are changed specifically to meet the needs and support the culture of the Crees of Mistissini.

Recently appointed Mistissini Police Director, Calvin Blacksmith, says that the Police Department is fully accountable to Chief and Council and to community members. One of his department's current priorities is to write a mission statement based on the goals and values associated with the police function.

Cree Nation of Mistissini Police Station

Mistissini also takes care of its own fire protection. The community has a fully equipped fire department and recently assessed its fire protection program for insurance and emergency response.

Cree Nation of Mistissini Fire Department

The Cree Nation of Mistissini is now doing a comprehensive organizational and operational review for the community. An organizational planning consultant is doing the review, which includes:

- developing a vision statement;
- reorganizing the administrative structure and reviewing management to make sure there is accountability;
- empowering and including community members;
- developing an active planning process and plan;
- creating jobs and economic development;
- improving community spirit and activity;
- improving local education and links with traditional life;
- improving housing;
- improving relationships with other Cree entities;
- developing a renewed Community Master Plan; and
- creating a forestry task force and way of resolving trap line disputes.

The Cree Nation of Mistissini has succeeded in creating opportunities for community development and has capitalized on those opportunities. While many challenges lie ahead, the community has much to be proud of. When asked about the community's key to success, George Blacksmith is quick to respond.

"Our strength comes from our community members. They're very specific and determined when it comes to setting goals and are even more focused when it comes to implementing plans to achieve them. That's what makes our community strong and successful."

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Website: www.nation.mistissini.qc.ca

SIOUX VALLEY DAKOTA NATION

Self-Government Catalyst for Community Planning

- Perseverance through 15 years of negotiations
- Community support and involvement
- Capacity building and skills development
- Use of the *First Nations Land Management Act* as a stepping stone to developing land code

The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation is in southwestern Manitoba, 50 kilometres west of Brandon. Sioux Valley began self-government negotiations in 1988. It signed a framework agreement in 1990 and a comprehensive Agreement in Principle in 2001. The final self-government agreement is scheduled for signing in 2004, with the ratification vote in 2005. In preparation for self-government, Sioux Valley recognizes the need for a number of planning and management projects. It is now developing a citizenship code, comprehensive community plan, land code, environmental audit, needs assessment and administrative review.

On-reserve population	1,085
Reserve area	4,200 hectares
Townsite	Sioux Valley Dakota Nation
Region	Manitoba
Geographic zone	Code 1: located within 50 kilometres of the nearest service centre to which it has year-round road access
Climate zone	Code B: geographic location between 45 and 50 degrees latitude

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Sioux Valley is a member of the Dakota Nation. The members refer to themselves as the Buffalo Nation, based on their cultural history of roaming the plains of Canada and the United States following the buffalo herds. The Sioux Valley reserve is largely rural and is about five kilometres wide by ten kilometres in length. It is located in the Assiniboine River's floodplain.

A Long Road to Self-Government

Sioux Valley began self-government negotiations with the federal government in 1988. After extensive discussions with Chief and Council and community members, the framework agreement was formally signed in September 1990. The provincial government joined the discussions in November 1992. In March 2001, a Comprehensive Agreement-in-Principle (CAIP) was signed with Canada, as well as a Tripartite Agreement-in-Principle with Canada and Manitoba. The CAIP has a long list of issues to fix before the final agreement is signed.

Milestones on the road

1988	Negotiations begin
1990	Signing of Framework Agreement
1992	Province enters negotiations
2001	CAIP and Tripartite Agreement signed
2002-2003	Community plan needs assessment, administrative review prepared
2004	Final Agreement to be signed
2005	Ratification vote scheduled

In the press release for the signing, the Chief at the time, Ken Whitecloud said, "With this agreement we embark on final negotiations that will begin the process of bringing our people out from under the *Indian Act*, and give us the tools we need to once again take control of our future."

Grand entry of the CAIP signing ceremony. Left to right: Stanley McKay, Austin McKay, Gordon Bone

After the signing of the CAIP. Left to right: Eric Robertson, The Honourable Robert D. Nault, former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Chief Ken Whitecloud of the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation

Sioux Valley considers the long-term goals of the CAIP are:

- to set up a new relationship with the governments of Canada and Manitoba that affirms the inherent right to self-government;
- to make people see that the First Nation has the ability to control its own future and regain control over social, economic and political development; and
- to develop and carry out the government institutions and procedures that are needed to do the work of the First Nation.

Councillor Melissa Hotain summarizes the goals of self-government as, "the ability to make our own decisions and to be respected as a third level of government."

Councillor Melissa Hotain

Hotain agrees that the road to self-government has been a long and hard process. One of the challenges they faced included changes in the federal negotiating team. Hotain says this can set back the process by several months while the new members learn the issues.

Community Consultation Process

To get community members involved, Sioux Valley created background information about the self-government negotiations in the Dakota language. For example, they published a monthly newsletter in this language. Meetings and workshops are held regularly. They ask for input from the Elder's Steering Committee and the Constitution Committee, which is generally made up of younger community members. The Citizenship Committee is working on a Citizenship Code. Meetings were also held with off-reserve people to listen to their ideas and concerns.

One of the issues under negotiation is the right of Sioux Valley to determine membership. This involves discussing Bill C-62 and Aboriginal status issues. The Sioux Valley Dakota are concerned about the survival of their nation in the long term.

Excerpt from Vision Statement, Taken from Constitution

The Dakota Oyate recognize the challenges that lie ahead. With the passage of this constitution, the Dakota Oyate accept these challenges, pledging to all:

- to continue to honour the precious gifts given to us by the Creator, revitalizing our culture, language and traditions, and protecting the lands for future generations;
- to continue to pursue the recognition of our traditional territories and the restoration of our rights and powers over those territories;
- to continue to raise our children in the ways which were given to us, teaching them the values and customs we have learned from our Elders; and
- to continue to reclaim the full command over our lives and our relations with other peoples.

Community Planning

One of the steps identified in the self-government negotiations was developing a comprehensive community plan. However, it was just one of many requirements. Other requirements include a needs assessment, administrative review, environmental audit and a land code.

The urgency to finish the plan has increased. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) needed a community plan to give needed capital funding. Quick to respond, the First Nation hired a team of architects, planners and engineers to help develop their community plan. There were multiple meetings, including open community meetings, roundtable discussions with program managers, interviews with key individuals, inspections of all community buildings and extra research to identify issues and to create other approaches. Planning also included an interim environmental audit. This included water and soil testing to figure out what issues were critical to planning decisions. Although an environmental audit had been prepared as part of the negotiation activities, this second assessment was more specific and practical.

The new plan included developing a centered area in the community—a "downtown" focus, tree lines and moving housing out of the floodplain area. The study found a need for an expanded land base to accommodate future growth.

The only known legal survey of the lands of the Sioux Valley reserve was done in the 1870s. Finding a copy of the original survey was a problem. The parties agreed that the reserve boundaries would not be defined in the final agreement so that the issue is open for future land claim discussions.

FNLMA - A Stepping Stone to Developing a Land Code

Sioux Valley has asked to opt into the *First Nations Land Management Act* (FNLMA). Although developing a comprehensive land code will be part of the self-government agreement, it is scheduled to be done five years after the agreement is signed. Hotain says that the FNLMA will serve as a stepping stone to managing their own land code. She says, "the FNLMA will provide training and experience while we take our time and build our code."

Needs Assessment and Administrative Review

A needs assessment and an administrative review still have to be put in place to prepare for the signing of the final agreement.

Hotain and various program managers in the community prepared the skills-based needs assessment. They shared it with the self-government implementation working group to address the question, "What do we need for capacity training?" Hotain offers:

> *"If you look at what we need compared to what we've got now, we have a long way to go. For example, we don't have an Economic Development Officer or a Human Resources Officer, and we have a great need in the area of health services personnel. There is a huge area we need to build."*

In finishing the needs assessment, Sioux Valley kept the services of a consultant who was preparing a similar assessment for the Meadow Lake Tribal Council. The study was successful and Sioux Valley got $350,000 in funding for capacity training and development. They expect to get another $150,000.

Hotain knows there is still a lot to be done. The administrative review, although slow in getting started, has picked up speed and gone well. Hotain is pleased with the results. She also credits the INAC Regional Director General and staff for their continued help as Sioux Valley takes on this review.

Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Administration Building

Looking to the Future

The federal mandate for the final self-government agreement has been extended. The signing of the final agreement should be finished by March 2004, with the ratification vote in March 2005.

It has been hard work since 1988 when the negotiations first began, but the process is now starting to gather momentum. The signing of the final agreement will not only mark the end of the negotiation process, but will open a new door for Sioux Valley. Hotain's final words, "The drive has to come from the community, that they want change. People have to be interested in being part of the process."

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